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THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION.

THE

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION

CONSIDERED

In Eight Sermons,

PREACHED

BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

AS THE

BAMPTON LECTURE, 1848

FOR THE YEAR MDCCCXLVIII.

BY

EDWARD GARRARD MARSH, M. A.

CANON OF SOUTHWELL, VICAR OF AYLESFORD, AND
FORMERLY FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE.

Seeleys.

FLEET STREET, AND HANOVER STREET,
LONDON: MDCCCXLVIII.

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Extract from the last Will and Testament

of the late Rev. John Bampton, Canon of Salisbury.

—— " I give and bequeath my Lands and " Estates to the Chancellor, Masters, and Scho- " lars of the University of Oxford for ever; to " have and to hold all and singular the said " Lands or Estates upon trust, and to the in- " tents and purposes hereinafter mentioned; that " is to say, I will and appoint that the Vice- " Chancellor of the University of Oxford for the " time being shall take and receive all the rents, " issues, and profits thereof, and (after all taxes, " reparations, and necessary deductions made) " that he pay all the remainder to the endowment " of eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, to be es- " tablished for ever in the said University, and " to be performed in the manner following:

" I direct and appoint, that, upon the first " Tuesday in Easter Term, a Lecturer be yearly " chosen by the Heads of Colleges only, and by " no others, in the room adjoining to the Print- " ing-House, between the hours of ten in the " morning and two in the afternoon, to preach " eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, the year fol- " lowing, at St. Mary's in Oxford, between the " commencement of the last month in Lent " Term, and the end of the third week in Act " Term.

" Also I direct and appoint, that the eight " Divinity Lecture Sermons shall be preached " upon either of the following Subjects—to con- " firm and establish the Christian Faith, and to " confute all heretics and schismatics—upon the " divine authority of the holy Scriptures—upon " the authority of the writings of the primitive " Fathers, as to the faith and practice of the " primitive Church—upon the Divinity of our " Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—upon the " Divinity of the Holy Ghost—upon the Articles " of the Christian Faith, as comprehended in the " Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.

" Also I direct, that thirty copies of the eight " Divinity Lecture Sermons shall be always " printed, within two months after they are " preached, and one copy shall be given to the " Chancellor of the University, and one copy to " the Head of every College, and one copy to " the Mayor of the city of Oxford, and one copy " to be put into the Bodleian Library ; and the " expense of printing them shall be paid out of " the revenue of the Land or Estates given for " establishing the Divinity Lecture Sermons ; " and the Preacher shall not be paid, nor be en- " titled to the revenue, before they are printed.

" Also I direct and appoint, that no person " shall be qualified to preach the Divinity Lec- " ture Sermons, unless he hath taken the degree " of Master of Arts at least, in one of the two " Universities of Oxford or Cambridge ; and " that the same person shall never preach the " Divinity Lecture Sermons twice."

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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

SERMON I.

1 CORINTHIANS XI. 7.

He is the image and glory of God.

THESE words, though introduced quite incidentally in the discussion of a matter of far inferior moment, contain the boldest assertion of the original dignity of our nature, that is to be found in the sacred volume. They imply not only, that our first parent was created in the image and likeness of God, a statement, which is often repeated there, but further, that God took pleasure in his own likeness, and even gloried in it, when visibly impressed upon this new-formed creature. We read in the first chapter of Genesis, that God saw every thing, which he had made, and behold! it was very good. He therefore viewed it with complacency, as

> Answ'ring his great idea,

and fulfilling the purpose, which he had designed

by it. But on man he looked with a higher sentiment of delight. The creation of man had been preceded by a council, as it were, of the eternal Three, who thus announced the result of their united deliberation—‘ Let us make man in ‘ our image after our likeness ! and let them have ‘ dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the ‘ fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all ‘ the earth, and over every creeping thing, that ‘ creepeth upon the earth ! ’ So God created man in his own image. In the image of God created he him. This reduplication in the statement of the inspired historian marks the satisfaction, with which God put the finishing stroke, if we may so describe it, to his creation ; and we thus understand something of the import of that sublime and daring expression, which asserts concerning man in his primitive integrity and honour—‘ He is the image and glory of God.’

In what then did this image of God consist, an image, in which the divine being himself is said to have gloried ?

First it consisted in dominion over all creatures, who occupied the earth, which was given for his habitation. This is implied in the very terms of

the decree—‘ Let us make man in our image after ‘ our likeness ! and let them have dominion !’ A dominion over a world formed an apt resemblance, though necessarily a very feeble and distant, a miniature resemblance, as it were, of the majesty of him, who is lord of the universe. It declared him within his narrow sphere sovereign and supreme.

But this point of resemblance would have been very faint, and could hardly have warranted the strong language of the apostle, had not Adam been gifted not only with absolute dominion, but also with those qualities, which were necessary to enable him to exercise it with wisdom and justice.

For this purpose then we find him endowed with extraordinary knowledge. The Lord, God, brought every beast of the field and every fowl of the air unto Adam, perhaps on the very first day of his existence, to see, what he would call them ; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. To give names to every living creature implies an intimate knowledge of all their properties and distinctive characters, which were thus almost on

the same day imparted to the creatures, and communicated to Adam. He was thus qualified to govern them, when he knew all, that related to them, their appetites, dispositions, instincts, and sagacities; and the description, thus vividly drawn, of the Lord, God, bringing them all in succession before Adam, to see, what he would call them, indicates a delight in witnessing the perfect knowledge, which had been thus instantaneously bestowed upon a creature, who but an hour before had no existence, which corresponds in some measure to the picture, furnished so long afterwards by the apostle in the words—'He is the image and glory of God.'

Yet knowledge alone would not be a godlike quality. The fallen angels no doubt retain a measure of knowledge far beyond the conception of our now impaired and stunted faculties. But the knowledge, imparted to Adam, was also accompanied with that inherent holiness of disposition, without which he could never have made a right and wholesome use of it.

Accordingly this is the true and distinguishing quality, which constitutes the image and likeness of God. When therefore it pleased our gracious

father in his mercy to renew in us the divine image, which sin had obliterated, as in one place it is written, that the new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him, that created him, so in another it is explicitly asserted, that the new man is created after God in righteousness and true holiness.

In a word God created man upright. His thoughts, his feelings, and his affections were all rightly directed; and, since with this rectitude of disposition he possessed also an intuitive knowledge of all things, which for the discharge of his proper duty it at all concerned him to know, he was thus clearly furnished with all requisites for the exercise of that universal dominion within

this visible diurnal sphere,

with which he was invested.

Let us then endeavor to ascertain with a little more distinctness, what is meant by that original holiness of our nature, in which more than in any other quality consisted its resemblance to God! For, if the loss of that holiness was the true forfeiture, which the fall entailed

upon us, and if the recovery of it be the grand object in all the œconomy of redemption, it is evident, that an accurate acquaintance with the features, by which our original similitude to our maker was characterized, and a consequent perception of their loveliness and beauty, must be a great help to us in our endeavour to retrace our steps, or at least to apprehend the suitableness of the means, which have been graciously appointed for that end.

To this inquiry therefore (that is to an inquiry into the particulars, which constituted the original holiness and perfection of our nature) the present introductory lecture will be devoted: and may he, who lived, and died, and rose again, and ascended into Heaven, and, while he there pleads the cause of his people, sends down thence the holy Spirit into the hearts of believers, to restore to us that holiness, which, as our primitive endowment and birthright, entitled our first parent to be regarded, as the image and glory of God, bless and guide us in this investigation, that we may all be led into the right way, and be preserved in it unto the end!

Now it cannot be doubted, that the chief element in that character, which formed the excellence of Adam at his creation, was obedience to the first commandment. That commandment, as propounded by our lord himself, the restorer of our race, is—'Thou shalt love the Lord, thy 'God, with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with 'all thy soul, and with all thy strength.'

Adam accordingly on the very first moment of his existence knew God. He knew him, as his creator. He knew him also, as the author of the universe, and consequently, as the most glorious being in it. He was enabled at once to contemplate him in all his godlike perfections, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders: and, knowing further, that to him he owed every thing, that he possessed or enjoyed, his life, his soul, and his body, the faculties of the one, and the powers of the other, together with all those comforts and blessings, which surrounded him, as well as that extensive dominion, with which he was entrusted, he could not but be attracted towards him, and disposed to hold constant communion with him, to regard him with that filial reverence, which was his just due,

and to address him in prayer and praise. In short, being a holy and upright creature, he could not, when he knew God, fail to glorify him, as God, and to be thankful. That good and gracious sovereign, the footsteps of whose bounty were visible in Heaven above and on the earth beneath, and whose wisdom, greatness, and majesty were as conspicuous and universal as his goodness, must have appeared to him the most attractive object within the range of his observation; nor could he do otherwise than love him with all his mind, heart, soul, and strength. Such love would necessarily prompt implicit obedience; and it was no doubt both his desire and his delight to know his righteous will, and to conform to it in all things.

But forasmuch as the will of God in regard to his intelligent creatures branches out into two commandments, and he requires them not only to love him with all their powers, but also to love their neighbour, as themselves, hence he was pleased to declare concerning Adam on his first formation—'It is not good, that the man should 'be alone. I will make him an help, meet for 'him.'—: and no sooner was Eve formed, than it

appeared to be the will of their divine parent, that she should only be the first of a numerous family ; for she was immediately declared to be the mother of all living : and towards all these the then understood, and since written law of God was—' Thou shalt love them all, as thyself.'

And can we doubt, that Adam was thus disposed toward all his fellow-immortals, whenever they should be born ? That disposition indeed, while he was in Paradise, was only put to the test in respect to one human being. But towards her his love appears to have been rather in excess than in defect. He was not required to love her, as he loved God, with all his powers, but only, as he loved himself, whereas his first fault would seem to have been, that he loved her with an idolatrous affection, an affection beyond that, which he had for God : for it is particularly written, that, whereas Eve, being deceived, was in the transgression, Adam was not deceived, but yet, when she gave him of the forbidden fruit, he from a fond and fatal attachment to a creature, whom he was commanded indeed to love, but not to love more than his creator, wilfully took part in her crime, and tasted of the tree, which God commanded them not.

While therefore Adam and Eve continued innocent, we have reason to conclude, that they lived in the pure spirit of that twofold precept—'Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all 'thy heart, and thy neighbour, as thyself.'

And from this hallowed source, while it continued pure, there can be no doubt, that all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works would proceed: for how can any thing, that is unholy, mean, or selfish, issue from the love of God and man?

Moreover, being in this sense a holy, he was also necessarily a happy creature: for what was there to impede his happiness?

In the first place there was nothing from without, that could disturb his peace. God saw every thing, that he had made; and behold! it was very good. The animals in Paradise were harmless and docile, neither exciting terror, nor occasioning mischief, but yielding willing obedience to their lord; and the delightful picture in Isaiah, which is emblematical of the restored Eden, was doubtless realized in the original. The wolf dwelt with the lamb, and the leopard lay down with the kid, and the calf and the

young lion and the fatling together. And as the animals, so also the plants were innocuous. Thorns and thistles had not then sprung out of the earth ; no poison lay concealed in root or berry ; but out of the ground made the Lord, God, to grow every tree, that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food. In short, before sin had tainted the atmosphere with pestilence and death, and turned the bountiful provision of the earth into poison, there was nothing in all, that Adam saw around him, to produce annoyance, uneasiness, or alarm.

Nor, secondly was there any thing within him, to impair his enjoyment. We know very well, that no degree of power can satisfy an ambitious man, no abundance of wealth a covetous man, nor any extent of pleasure a voluptuous man. So though the garden of Eden was full of delights, though there was nothing admitted there, which could disturb the tranquillity, or impair the comfort of its possessors, still, if the spirit, which was in Adam, like that, which haunts his descendants, had lusted to envy, if there had still been a desire of something, not possessed, if there had been in his bosom a querulous, selfish, or

ambitious disposition, all this goodness, like the prosperity of Haman, would have availed him nothing, so long as that one desire was ungratified. One uneasy passion would vitiate the mind, and disqualify it for perfect enjoyment. But in Adam there was nothing of this kind. As there was nothing without, so was there nothing within him, to discompose that perfect satisfaction, with which he regarded all the dispensations of his maker. Being full of love, he was full of peace ; and so long as he continued so, his happiness was incapable of interruption or diminution.

But, though there was thus nothing from without, and nothing within him, to ruffle the calm, or mar the enjoyment of his soul, there would seem to be something wanting, besides these negative recommendations, to constitute the happiness of our first progenitors. A stagnation of the soul is not enjoyment ; and there needs some active spring of comfort, some living energy, like the well of water, so expressively described by our saviour, as springing up within the heart of a believer, to produce positive and perfect happiness : and such a perpetual spring

of joy and delight was found in the constant flow of benevolent affection. This is the most delightful of all human sensations, and, when fixed on an object, truly worthy of it, and not impeded by any conflicting emotion, or any counteracting influence, is itself a source of happiness inexhaustible. What then must be the happiness of that soul, where God is the object of its supreme affection, the best, the holiest, the most perfect of beings, whose goodness can never disappoint any, that trust to it, any more than his power can fail, or his wisdom become subject to decay ? Love desires the good or the honour of its object, not its own. When therefore all the wants of a creature are supplied to the full, and, looking out of himself for objects, on which to bestow his affection, he finds one object, altogether worthy of it, who at once deserves, returns, and rewards it, what can be wanting to the happiness of such a creature ? And yet the goodness of God was not satisfied to suffer the affections of his new-formed creature to rest solely upon himself. He raised up another object, more upon a level with Adam, more meet therefore for his daily and familiar conversation ; and from that

one he promised to raise up a multitude of others, all of whom ; so long as they observed the law of rectitude, in which they were created, would be worthy, though in an inferior degree, of his love, and on whom it would be at once his privilege and his duty to bestow it, not in any scanty degree or measure, but even as he loved himself; for both he and these objects of his affection would be in all respects equal, and the love, which regarded them all, as they deserve, must be an impartial love, extending to all mankind.

Still however after all, though these companions of his daily life would be regarded by him with a sure, but proportionate attachment, the supreme affection of a perfect creature must ever rest upon his creator. His perfections indeed are infinite ; and the development of them to the understanding of a finite creature may engage his faculties to eternity. Thus the holy angels, for example, had long been familiarly acquainted with the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of God ; and every successive act of his providence, and every successive occupation, in which he saw fit to employ them, would discover those qualities in him more and more to their apprehension.

But yet, till the fall of man gave occasion to it, they knew nothing of the mercy of God. That was an attribute, which had not yet been disclosed ; and to the exercise of it there existed impediments in that very holiness of his administration, which they knew, that nothing could be permitted to violate, and which consequently made them desire to look into the mystery, by which those impediments were destined to be overcome, and the mercy of God introduced triumphantly, rejoicing against judgment. And so too there may be many other qualities in God, with which it is little to say, that we are not acquainted, but the very existence of which we are perhaps in our present state incompetent to conceive, qualities, which have never yet been discovered to the universe, as there must have been a time, before the worlds were, when even his creative power was unknown, when that wisdom and goodness, which resided in him from all eternity, had not displayed themselves, but the gradual disclosure of which in acts, peculiar to Deity, may give ever new and constant delight to souls, who love to contemplate his perfections, and that in infinite progression for ever and ever.

When therefore such is the being, towards whom the supreme affections of an intelligent creature are kept in perpetual exercise by a perpetually improving acquaintance with his divine character and actions, to say nothing now of the enlargement of the faculties themselves for the comprehension of so vast an object, what streams of ineffable delight must be continually flowing into a soul, so occupied! Isaiah gives us some faint notion of it, where he says—'Then had thy 'peace been as a river, and thy righteousness, 'as the waves of the sea.'

Nevertheless, while this was the condition of Adam, a holy, happy creature, the image of God upon earth, and even his glory, although with one exception nothing was suffered to approach him, which could in any degree disturb his serenity, or impair his enjoyment, and he might thus seem to be

> from within
> And from without to all temptations arm'd,

it did not please his almighty sovereign to exempt him from trial. There was a malignant being,

who, not having kept his first estate of innocence and happiness, but left his own habitation in Heaven, sought to pervert others also from their allegiance, and to involve them in the same destruction and misery. Him the Lord suffered to try his cruel skill upon the founders of the human race, the governors of this new world: and unhappily his malice was too successful. Neither Adam, nor Eve had any excuse for yielding to his seduction. Created in the image of their maker, gifted with all requisite knowledge, endowed with an ample dominion, surrounded with every thing, that could minister to their delight, and privileged to hold high and unrestrained communion with their creator, they were assuredly

Sufficient to have stood, tho' free to fall:

Nor could the enmity of the devil have prevailed in any degree against them, if Eve had not lent an ear to suggestions, which she ought to have indignantly repelled.

However Adam fell. He transgressed a clear commandment of his maker: and by that one act his relation to God, his affection towards him,

and all those qualities of mind, which constituted his happiness, underwent a sad alteration; and he, who was before the image and glory of God, being no longer upright, forfeited his favour, and incurred his displeasure. He was cast out of Paradise, and doomed to a life of labour. But this was little. He lost that innocence and purity, in which only he could be regarded, as bearing the likeness of his maker, became a guilty creature, and was no longer capable of that perfect love of God, which casteth out fear, or of that confiding and unmingled love to his partner in sin and sorrow, which their common guilt had clouded with painful recollections. The similitude of God was gone; and one act had already been committed, in which they resembled his enemy. In short the downward course of iniquity was begun: and who could stop its progress? For whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin.

Here then began a new stage in human existence. The fall of man was final, and appeared to be incurable: for how could he recover from a fall, which separated him from the author of his being, the source of all purity and perfection?

But in this crisis of his destiny, when all things concurred to proclaim his irretrievable perdition, the wonderful mercy of God interposed, and devised a scheme for his restoration. By one man sin had entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death has since passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ, our lord.

For the gradual development and eventual accomplishment of this merciful design the sentence of death was respited; and a long interval was afforded, within which the mischief of the fall might be repaired, and they might recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who were taken captive by him at his will.

This is a great mystery. Saint Paul calls it the mystery of godliness. A dreadful ruin had befallen the species, and there needed a remedy, more powerful than the disease, before it could be healed. Whether, or where this remedy was to be found, or how it was to be rendered efficacious, remains to be considered.

But we shall proceed in the investigation of these questions with best hope of success, if we previously examine the extent and character of the change, which human nature sustained through the first transgression.

When these two preliminary points, the antecedent glory, and the subsequent fall of man, shall have been settled and understood, and we have thus traced out the effect, which the fall of Adam has produced upon the integrity of that nature, which we all inherit from him, we shall have formed some estimate both of our primitive constitution, and also of that, to which we now find ourselves reduced. Having surveyed the defect in all its fearful magnitude, we shall be better able to distinguish the qualities, by which it must be supplied. We shall perceive, what in the nature of things requires to be done, if ever the evil of the fall shall be cured, and the original perfection of our nature regained.

Whether indeed such a complete recovery is to be hoped for, and, if so, how it is to be brought about, is a matter of pure revelation: nor indeed could any revelation from Heaven be more valuable than that, which should relieve our natural

uneasiness upon these questions. We cannot but be anxious to know, whether any adequate means have been devised for accomplishing this most necessary restoration, and in what those means consist. It is too evident, that, whatever they may be, they are not universally understood or followed, and that the world does not present that picture of reformed and regenerated humanity, which is to be desired. These are considerations, which impart peculiar solemnity to an inquiry into the particulars of that healing process, through which by the wisdom and mercy of God the soul of man may regain the glory, which it has lost, that so his gracious purpose in our favour may be accomplished, to restore under a new head, ἀνακέφαλαιώσασθαι, as saint Paul expresses it, all things in Christ.

That process is in scripture called the work of sanctification. The nature of it, the errors and misapprehensions, which have been committed in regard to it, and the means, by which it is to be carried forward, wherever it is real and effectual, are the subject, which is proposed for the ensuing course.

In the regular prosecution of this inquiry the

next lecture will accordingly be devoted, as I have already intimated, to a consideration of the precise extent and nature of the mischief, consequent upon the fall. After this we may proceed in the third lecture to consider, what has been actually revealed to us in regard to this evil and its remedy. But, forasmuch as this revelation is not even now universally received, and since, even where it is professedly received, much more then, where it is not, grave mistakes are continually made upon a subject, the most interesting and important of any, on which the mind of man can be engaged, we shall go on in the four lectures, which will follow, to examine cursorily the various errors, which have prevailed in regard to it, as exemplified in the idolatry, the philosophy, and the morality of the heathens, as well as in the formalism, or mysticism, the ecclesiastical tyranny, or ascetic self-righteousness, which have at various times misled those, to whom the oracles of God have been committed, and further to trace, so far as may be practicable, the common source, in which these various errors have originated: after which it will only remain in a concluding lecture to contrast the true doctrine of

sanctification with the several misapprehensions of it, which will have been specified, that by thus observing the leading particulars, in which the real life of a christian consists, the dangers, by which it is encompassed, and the divine helps and encouragements, by which it is supported, we may at length be enabled to deduce such principles as under the direction of scripture, and by the blessing of its divine author, may preserve us from dangerous error in following again after that holiness, without which it is declared to us in the volume of inspiration, that no man, whatever may be his other endowments, recommendations, or advantages, shall see the Lord.

May his gracious and sanctifying spirit lead us into all truth, and render it effective to our personal salvation!

SERMON II.

1 JOHN v. 19.

The whole world lieth in wickedness.

How awfully different is the statement in this text from that, which describes the original dignity of man! When there was but one man on the face of the earth, and he retained his primeval innocence, he was the image and glory of God. But at a time, when the earth was overspread with innumerable multitudes of inhabitants, saint John is moved by the holy Ghost to declare concerning it, that the whole world lieth in wickedness. Such is the fearful consequence of that one sin, which

Brought death into the world, and all our woe.

But we must examine the precise meaning of the text, before we pursue it into the particulars, of which it consists. 'Ὁ κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ 'κειται.' The proposition is opposed to one, which almost immediately follows. 'Ἐσμεν ἐν

'τῷ ἀληθινῷ.' They must be translated alike; and, if by τῷ ἀληθινῷ a person is meant, we must also understand a person by τῷ πονηρῷ. Now the apostle has explained his own meaning in the one phrase: for by τῷ ἀληθινῷ he declares, that he means the son of God, Jesus Christ. Therefore by τῷ πονηρῷ he must mean a person likewise: and the two correspondent phrases may be rendered—'The whole world lieth in 'the wicked one. We are in the true one.'

But still there remains the question—What is meant by lying in the wicked one, and being in the true one? The expressions are undoubtedly figurative: and the surest way of ascertaining the meaning of a figurative expression is by observing, what the same phrase imports, when used without a figure.

Now, when our blessed lord is introduced to the notice of the shepherds, as τὸ βρέφος, κείμενον ἐν τῇ φάτνῃ, we understand by that phrase, that the holy babe rested upon the manger, and was supported by it: and this we should understand, whether it was said, that he lay, or that he was in the manger. Just so here therefore we are taught, that the whole world rests or reposes upon the evil

one, being upheld and supported by him, but that we, christians, on the contrary rest upon the true one, and are upheld and supported by Jesus Christ. The whole unconverted world consequently is under the dominion of the wicked one, while those, who truly believe in Jesus Christ, are under the dominion of him, who is true, nay, who is himself, to use his own language, the way, and the truth, and the life, or, as he speaks of himself in another place, he, that is holy, he, that is true.

'The whole world lieth in wickedness.' Let us consider, what this painful statement imports! and may he, who desireth not the death of a sinner, effectually translate us all from the power of Satan unto the kingdom of his dear son!

The origin of this frightful evil is thus described by saint Paul. 'The serpent beguiled 'Eve through his subtlety.' He led her to believe, that by tasting the forbidden fruit she should gratify at once her eye, her taste, and her appetite for knowledge, whereas, when the short fever of indulgence was past, nothing could be more distasteful to her than the memory of that tree,

and the only increase of knowledge, which she obtained, was an acquaintance with evil, to which it had been her blessed privilege to remain a stranger: and the course, which he pursued with Eve, he has since pursued with all her posterity; for so we are expressly informed in the book of revelation, where it is written—'That 'old serpent, called the devil and Satan, deceiv-'eth the whole world.' And does not enlightened observation and conscious experience confirm the testimony? Else by what strange infatuation is it, that the pleasures of sin are always dressed out to the imagination of youth in the most flattering colours, as if nothing could be wanting to the felicity of indulgence, while yet it is universally found in the issue, that even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness, and we learn too late the lesson, of which the word of God had long forewarned us—"Know, and see, that it is an evil thing "and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord, "thy God, and that my fear is not in thee"—'saith the Lord, God of hosts'—? The delusive fascination of sin, which, as the eye of a serpent attracts the captivated bird to its destruc-

tion, perpetually decoys multitudes of the children of men to their ruin, bears witness to the power of the tempter, and shews, that he has access to our senses, and is able by the fallacious impression, which he makes upon them, to allure unsuspecting souls to their own undoing.

This however is only one example, to prove, that in the fall of our first parents we are all partakers. The mysterious community of nature, which is summed up in that short, but fearful sentence—'By one man sin entered into the 'world, and death by sin, and so death passed 'upon all men, for that all have sinned'—, it would be equally hopeless to explain, or to deny. Rather let us with all humility receive the truth, as we find it recorded in our ninth article, that original sin is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so, that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and therefore in every person, born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation!

Our present business is to trace the particulars,

or some of them, in which this corruption consists, and to shew, that the image and likeness of God, in which our first father was created, passed away from him, and with him from all his posterity, the moment he became guilty of sinning against God. He, who has once sinned, is no longer an upright creature ; and from that one defect others immediately result, which are all alike destructive to that similitude, which he once bore, to his holy creator.

We have already remarked upon the deceitfulness of sin, ἀπάτη τῆς ἁμαρτίας, or, as the same phrase is elsewhere translated, the deceiveableness of unrighteousness, ἀπάτη τῆς ἀδικίας. If sin itself destroys our righteousness, its deceitfulness impairs our knowledge : and hence these two evils are commonly classed together in scripture— ' The heart is deceitful above all things, and des- ' perately wicked.' It is deceitful, because it is wicked, and loves to be deceived. Because it has pleasure in unrighteousness, therefore it receives not the love of the truth, but is prone to believe a lie. So again Isaiah describes the transgressor. ' A deceived heart hath turned ' him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul,

' nor say—" Is there not a lie in my right " hand ? " '

It is plain, that a heart, thus prone to deceive, and to be deceived, cannot retain that clear knowledge of things, which was part of the original endowment of our nature. But particularly it will decline in the knowledge of God. Having refused to obey him, it regards him under a new aspect, as arrayed in terrors, and pledged by the very truth of his word and the awful holiness of his character to punish transgressors. Hence, instead of taking pleasure in holding communion with him, it is unwilling to think of him. Adam and his wife immediately after the first sin hid themselves from the presence of the Lord, God, amongst the trees of the garden : and the necessary consequence of this indisposition to meet their benefactor, or to look up to him, as before, is, that the very knowledge of him instead of improving, as it would otherwise do, to all eternity, must decline. The heart turns aside from the contemplation of him, till at length God is not in all its thoughts : and this forgetfulness of God must lead to ignorance of him. Thence sprang all those false notions of God, which pre-

vailed among the heathen, who thought, that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device, till at length, as it is written, they sacrificed unto devils, not to God, to gods, whom they knew not, to new gods, that came newly up, whom their fathers feared not.

Thus the knowledge of the true God came to be lost in the world, except among that one favored people, with whom it was still preserved by special revelation. Nor was this the case only in barbarous nations, unenlightened by learning, and untaught in science. The world by wisdom knew not God ; and even those, whose splendid researches and attainments have won universal admiration, and displayed a compass of mind, not to be easily baffled, were yet involved in the darkness of ignorance upon a subject, with which above all others it concerns us to be acquainted, the nature and attributes, the government and laws of the God, who made them. Nor can it be doubted, that, when the noblest object of human knowledge was hidden from view, and awful mistakes were made concerning the first principles of natural theology,

the theory of morals also must be liable to be perverted, and the intellect of man, unvisited by the light of heavenly truth, and clouded by worldly passion and prejudice, must lose much of its original perspicacity, freedom of thought, and largeness of view, and thus even in inferior things fall short of that readiness of apprehension and correctness of judgment, which he enjoyed, when he was conversant with the highest principles, and walked habitually with God.

Of course with the knowledge of God the love of him must perish too: or rather perhaps it should be said, that the love of him went first, and the knowledge of him followed. Men could not regard a being, whom they had offended, with that supreme and delighted affection, with which he was contemplated before the fall. They had learned to fear him, as an avenging judge: and that fear is incompatible with perfect love; for, as an apostle reasons, there is no fear in love, because fear hath torment. Hence it became painful and uneasy to think of God. He came not readily into the thoughts of men. He was forgotten, and in time unknown.

Thus the first and greatest of the command-

ments came to be neglected. But the second is like unto it. We need not wonder therefore, if, when the first was disregarded, the second shared its fate. When men ceased to love God with all their powers, they ceased to love their neighbour, as themselves.

Indeed on this subject we need not say much: for who is there, that would now dare to profess, that he loves his neighbour, every neighbour, every man therefore (for such is the extent of the command), as himself? The idea is so far from being realized, that by many it would be regarded, as impracticable and romantic. Not to love some persons indeed would be deemed monstrous and unnatural. But to love our families, and country, our intimate acquaintance, or associates, would fill in most men's minds the measure of the duty. Consequently the original disposition of Adam to love his neighbour, as himself, a disposition, acted upon by all holy angels, and hereafter to be exhibited anew by the whole company of the redeemed in Heaven, is to be reckoned, as a part of that fatal loss, which the first sin occasioned.

And consequently, when the knowledge of the

true God declined, and when by inevitable consequence the supreme love of God and the impartial love of man ceased to be characteristics of our nature, mankind became unfitted to exercise that dominion over the other animals, which was at first entrusted to them. It was not indeed altogether taken away. Nay. It may be said to have been in some measure extended, when many of the other animals were given him for food. But there are animals now, which disown his authority, which maintain perpetual warfare with him, and, though often subdued, and in individual instances tamed, yet preserve, as a race, their wild freedom, and refuse to be brought into subjection.

When therefore mankind have lost that absolute dominion over the inferior creatures, which was their primitive distinction, when they have also lost what is a far more lamentable forfeiture, that righteousness and true holiness, which consisted in the pure and disinterested love of God and of their fellow-men, when they have even lost, except in those countries, and in the instance of those persons, to whom it has been restored by a new revelation, the very knowledge

of his perfections and character, what then has become of that image and likeness of God, in which they were created? They are no longer the image and glory of God; nor can we hesitate to admit, that, except, where divine grace has re-asserted its empire, the whole world lieth under the dominion of the wicked one.

This indeed is expressly declared in some other passages of the new testament as well as in the text. For instance saint Paul says to the Ephesians—'In time past ye walked according 'to the course of this world'—; and then it is immediately added, as if the two modes of statement were of precisely the same import—'according to the prince of the power of the air, 'the spirit, that now worketh in the children of 'disobedience.' And to the same effect also our blessed saviour does not scruple to call the devil the prince of this world, saying—'The prince of 'this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.' Nor are there wanting intimations to a similar purport in the earlier writings of the bible. Thus the universal apostasy of mankind is asserted in the book of psalms, where it is written, that God looked down from Heaven upon the

children of men, to see, if there were any, that would understand, and seek after God; but they were all gone out of the way: and even in the antediluvian age, soon after the introduction of sin into this part of the creation of God, it is written—'God saw, that the wickedness of 'man was great in the earth, and that every 'imagination of the thoughts of his heart was 'only evil continually.'

But, if the poison of the fall thus diffused itself universally, and left not a soul of man uninfected by the contagion, so, that even the purest and best of men has reason to say—'Be-'hold! I am vile. Mine iniquities are gone over 'my head, and are like a sore burden, too 'heavy for me to bear'—, to what a height of wickedness has it not risen in some instances! which indeed we might decline to notice, if they could be considered, as mere proofs of individual extravagance and guilt, but which are really to be regarded, as more virulent symptoms of the same fatal epidemic, which has befallen the species. Thus at one time the world was filled with violence, and thereby brought down upon itself the judgment of the flood. At another

time such was the pollution of a particular part of it, that it provoked Heaven to rain down fire and brimstone upon the cities of the ungodly. At another time, the iniquity of the seven nations of Canaan having become full, a sentence of extermination was pronounced against them all. The pride of Babylon and other imperial cities has caused them to be swept away from the face of the earth. And how truly, and yet how generally is it said by David in language, still fearfully applicable, that the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty! Frightful will be the disclosures, which the last day will make, of the wickedness, lasciviousness, and cruelty of men: for, when thou, Lord, makest inquisition for blood, thou rememberest them.

Is this then the race, which God created upright, to be a representation, a visible transcript of his own holiness? How is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed! 'I 'had planted thee' (may the Lord say to us), 'a 'noble vine, wholly a right seed. How art thou 'turned into a degenerate plant of a strange vine 'unto me!'

And all this must be regarded, as the work of that evil spirit, who first deceived Eve by his subtlety. Although we see him not, nor do we in the ordinary intercourse of society hear any thing about him, yet are the holy scriptures full of declarations, attesting the reality and power of his efforts for the completion of that victory, which was won from our ancestors in the garden of Eden. To say nothing of that fearful power, which he exercised in the time of our saviour, when he gained possession of the bodies of men, and spoke and acted with their organs of speech and motion, we are warned continually against his artifices for the ruin of the soul. 'Be sober!' —says saint Peter. 'Be vigilant, because your 'adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh 'about, seeking, whom he may devour!' 'We 'are not ignorant' (says saint Paul) 'of his de-'vices. Put on the whole armour of God, that 'ye may be able to stand against the wiles 'of the devil!' He has legions of evil spirits at his command, who act with union, subordination, and discipline, having among them principalities and powers, and being acknowledged in scripture, as the rulers of the darkness of this

world: and accordingly it is distinctly stated in the text, that the whole world lies naturally under their power, subject to their dominion, and a willing prey to their machinations.

Nor yet was the world at large altogether insensible to the evil influence, under which it lay. Men did not indeed ascribe it to any unseen agency, operating with powerful effect upon their minds. But they perceived a corrupt principle, actuating the conduct of the great mass of mankind, and drawing them aside from those paths, which even in this world lead to happiness and peace. They perceived, that present pleasure is preferred by the many to ultimate good, that a prospect of personal advantage renders them deaf to the claims of friendship, or of the public welfare, and that, when some persons are found to act upon more generous principles, and to manifest extraordinary instances of integrity or patriotism, it has been the result of self-restraint and self-discipline, and not of following the spontaneous tendencies of nature. Hence they perceived, that man, if left to himself, is apt to err, to err both in sentiment, and in practice, to judge erroneously of what con-

stitutes his true interest, and, even when he has determined it rightly, to turn aside from the course, which leads to it. Hence they cast about in their minds to discover, what is the real good of man, and how it may be reached, by what means the counteracting tendency of nature may be best met, and a remedy discovered for that proneness to iniquity, which in spite of interest, reason, and experience prevails in all states of society.

The expedients, to which they resorted for this purpose, the errors, into which they fell, and the perplexities, which were occasioned by conflicting theories, will form a future subject for our inquiry.

For the present it may be sufficient to observe, how necessarily all these evils flowed from the admission of sin into the world. A single sin was sufficient to constitute man a transgressor. It deprived him of his uprightness, of that righteousness and true holiness, in which he resembled his maker. That conscious rectitude, in which alone he could approach him with confidence, or reckon securely upon his acceptance and favour, was gone, and gone too, so far as

any efforts of his own are concerned, irrecoverably, and for ever. No future course of obedience could cancel either the fault, or the recollection of it. He was no longer one, and never to all eternity could again be regarded, as one, who had not offended his maker, who had walked uprightly according to the measure of his knowledge and duty, and had maintained, unimpaired, the integrity, which he possessed at his creation. There might indeed still remain in him many relative virtues, much mutual affection, many generous feelings, much respect for excellence, and even a disposition to conform to it, when no overpowering temptation came in the way. There might even be in Adam, after he fell, a remaining love for the God, whom he had offended, though accompanied with dread of his wrath. But, as his love for his maker could no longer be perfect or absolute, a love with all the heart and soul and mind and strength, it was not the love, which fulfils the law. There might also still be, and no doubt there was much love for his fellow-creatures. But, if he could not love them, as himself, it was such a love as left him an offender, a defaulter, liable to the penalties of the violated law:

and thus, although even among heathens, unenlightened by revelation, there have since been many heroic instances of generosity and self-devotion, and of a readiness to suffer wrong rather than to do it, still it remains, that all, even the most splendid virtues of the best of human characters must needs fall short of the standard of duty, because the love, which it commands, can never be exhibited by a sinner.

But this is not all. Sin, once introduced into the heart, has a natural tendency to propagate itself, and, even if we leave out of our consideration the power and malice of a spiritual enemy, has in itself a downward gravitation, which disposes it for more iniquity. When love declines, other principles supply its place. Discontent, resentment, jealousy, despair of reconciliation to God, producing hatred of his holy law, disregard of his authority, contempt, envy, ambition, avarice, and every evil passion rise up easily in a bosom, which has been robbed of its best inmate: and thus men wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. When Adam had departed from obedience, he was easily led to deviate from truth. One vice generated another. The father

had rebelled against his God ; the son murdered his brother ; and but few generations passed, before the world was overspread with violence and crime. When once the law of God is broken, it is no longer loved ; and, not being loved, a disposition is engendered to resist it, wherever it can be done with impunity, to deny its obligation, or to lower its demands, till at length men, knowing the judgment of God, that they, which do such things, are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them, that do them. What sad pictures are drawn of human nature, when such events as the plague of Athens, or the factions of Corcyra set men loose from the restraints of civil society, and the terrors of human law ! and even under and amidst those restraints what contentions and fraud, what extravagance of sensual indulgence, and occasional outbreaks of violence and murder deform the face of society !

Perhaps however the strangest feature in human degeneracy as well as the most universal is pride. That a fallen creature should be proud, is most unnatural. That a ransomed creature, who owes all his liberty and his hopes to his benefactor, should be proud, adds ingratitude to folly. And yet

this perhaps has been the greatest of all hindrances to the reception of the gospel, men being unwilling even to be saved, if they may not be their own saviours. Nay. The most perverse and preposterous combinations result from it. Men are proud of their vices ; and, after they have been in some measure humbled by a sense of them, they are proud of their humility. Even that opprobrium of humanity, the burial of a lifeless corpse, often bears about its sad solemnity the trappings of pride ; and mankind at large appear to stand up before their maker, not, as petitioners for mercy, but as competitors for favour. Then with respect to their intercourse with each other how great is the pride of wealth, of birth, of rank, of country ! and yet how much greater in some instances the pride, which vaunts itself to be destitute of all these, and to rely on its own inherent dignity for a moral power, which no external advantages can confer ! And how ill does all this self-complacency sort with the condition of a being, who must be conscious in the midst of it, that he has offended his maker, and cannot justify himself before God !

Moreover, in the last place, this tendency of

sin in all its forms to propagate itself, and to grow to more ungodliness through the pride and wilfulness of nature has been manifested notwithstanding the gracious provision, which God has made, for the recovery of fallen man from sin and from uncleanness. Divine grace has ever striven against the iniquity of the world ; and there have always been some witnesses to the truth amidst the iniquity, which abounds. How much more frightful then would have been the progress of evil, if its tendency had not been thus counteracted ! If notwithstanding the grace of God, which has appeared to all men, teaching them, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, notwithstanding the success, which has been granted to the ministry of the gospel in many nations, and the degree of righteousness, which has been exhibited by many individuals, the whole world, taken, as a body, still lieth in the wicked one, what would be its condition, if this correcting influence had been withdrawn !

May God give further and further efficacy to the word of his grace, and to the means, which are used, by his appointment, for the conversion

of the nations, that they may speedily be recovered out of the dominion of the wicked one, and that so the mischief of the fall may at length be effectually repaired, and the kingdom of God reestablished in the world!

SERMON III.

JEREMIAH III. 22.

Return, ye backsliding children! and I will heal your backslidings.

It has been seen, that, when man was first created, he was the image and glory of God: for he was created upright. His nature was righteous and holy. He was gifted with a measure of knowledge, quite adequate to all his occasions. Most especially he knew the Lord, who made him, and was disposed by the very affections, originally implanted in his bosom, to love him with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength, and his neighbour, as himself. In addition to these high endowments he was entrusted with entire dominion over all inferior creatures, and was worthy of it: for, while his nature continued free from sin, he could not use it, but with wisdom, and consequently with advantage to the beings, committed to his care.

But sin, once admitted, defaced all this glory. When Adam became conscious of having offended his maker, he could no longer approach him with the cheerful confidence of a son. He could no longer love him, as he did before. He had learned to fear him : and as perfect love casteth out fear, so fear casteth out perfect love. The very thought of God was no longer that bright and happy thought, which it was in the beginning. It was rather a comfort to forget him for a time ; and thus the way was prepared for that ignorance of God, which soon overspread the world : and then, when the love of God declined, the love of his neighbour declined with it. That neighbour, being a sinner, was less amiable than before ; and he himself, being a sinner, was less apt to love him. Evil tempers, jealousies, envies, mutual dislikes, conflicting desires, rapacious dispositions, and all the other effects of ungoverned appetite were sure to supervene : and hence wars and fightings arose. He was no longer that holy, wise, and benevolent creature, who was fitted to hold rule over the animal creation. The beasts of the field began to multiply against him ; and his dominion, so far as he continued to retain it,

was the dominion of superior art or power, not the willing homage of dependent creatures to their lord.

Thus the very nature of man as well as his condition was changed ; and all, who partake of that nature, inherit it in its lapsed character, its crippled powers, its degeneracy, and its corruption. There is also in every thing, that is evil, a tendency to grow worse and worse. Disease generates disease ; and it is the character of sin to depart farther and farther from the standard of right. We see this exemplified in every barbarous state, which have all degenerated from a better and happier condition to their present destitution and misery.

Moreover, to this evil tendency in the nature of sin itself were added the perpetual machinations of a subtle adversary, who, having once succeeded in tempting our first parents to transgress, never desisted from his malignant attempt to seduce all their descendants, and to stimulate them to more ungodliness. Thus, having fallen once, they had fallen irrecoverably ; and the whole world came in time to lie prostrate under the dominion of the evil one, who became, as the

bible does not hesitate to call him, the god of this world.

Nor must we omit here to mention, what will be the final effect of this wickedness, if suffered to proceed to its ultimate consummation. Sin is indeed its own tormentor ; and its natural fruit and result is misery. But there is also, as we are forewarned by our gracious lord, a penal result of it, an everlasting fire, prepared not originally for any member of the human race, but for the devil and his angels, to which all, who have been taken captive by him at his will, and from that cause lie now under his dominion, if they be not previously recovered from that state of sin and danger, will at the last day be consigned together with the master, whom they have chosen, where according to the terrible denunciation of scripture they will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and be tormented with fire and brimstone.

How cheering then in this state of things are the words of the text—‘ Return, ye backsliding ‘ children ! and I will heal your backslidings.’— !

Indeed this invitation and promise are the more delightful, because it is clear, that without some such exterior influence and power the disease of nature is incurable. If we have ceased to love God in that degree, which is his just due, how can we ever hope to love him again, as we ought? Will our affections obey the command of our reason, and rise to a higher point at the dictation of our understandings? Can we raise them to a juster tone at our will? Can that, which has acquired a gravitating principle, which draws it down to the earth, rise upward again by its own innate power or buoyancy? Can the Æthiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may they also learn to do good, which are accustomed to do evil. Then may the human heart, being once stained with guilt, recover its native innocence. Even indeed if it could return to its original purity, it could not cancel the guilt of its past offences. But in fact, when once the affections have sunk below their right level, nothing can raise them again, except the operation of a new motive, unknown, or unacknowledged before: and this is exactly what is done in the gospel by the bringing in of a better hope.

The influence must come from abroad, which would

minister to' a mind diseas'd.

It cannot come from within.

How cheering then (I repeat) is the invitation, how delightful the promise, contained in the text—'Return, ye backsliding children! and I 'will heal your backslidings.'—! The promise is to heal, not merely to pardon, but to heal, to restore, to recover the original health and purity of the soul. But the promise is conditional: for it is addressed only to those, who will return.

You perceive therefore from the tenour of this invitation, and of the promise, with which it is coupled, that two things are necessary for the restoration of our fallen nature, that it must retrace its steps, and that its disease must be healed. Less than this will not answer the purpose of repairing the breach of the fall, and restoring us to our original condition.

With respect to the first point, it is quite indispensable, that the sinner must return. He must retrace his steps. God will not alter his laws in accommodation to human infirmity, still less in condescension to human sin. The law of

our nature must be obeyed. When the ten commandments, written upon two tables of stone, were broken, the Lord did not alter them, or diminish the rigour of his enactments in a single letter. His language is—'I will write on the 'tables the words, which were in the first tables, 'which thou brakest.' So his command remains still in full force—'Thou shalt love the Lord, thy 'God, with all thy mind, heart, soul, and 'strength, and thy neighbour as thyself'—: and he, who came, to save us, declares concerning it with a most solemn asseveration—'Verily I say 'unto you, till Heaven and Earth pass, one 'jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the 'law, till all be fulfilled.' It is absolutely necessary therefore, to the moral recovery of mankind, that they should obey the law, which they have broken. The backsliding children must return.

But we have already seen, that this involves a moral impossibility, unless some extraneous influence be exerted, to overcome the wrongful propensity, which has been contracted. Left to themselves, and to the tendencies of their fallen nature, the backsliding children cannot return.

Therefore, that they may not despair, a pro-

mise is made to them—'I will heal your back-'slidings.' The promise is, that the disease of nature shall be healed, that men shall again know and love the Lord, their God, with all their mind, heart, soul, and strength, and their neighbour, as themselves, and that they shall again become, as they were at first, the image and glory of God.

This then is the final result of the process of sanctification, which forms the proper subject of these lectures, that healing process, by which a sinner is to be converted into a saint, gradually parting with all his corrupt and corrupting tendencies, and advancing towards the attainment of those heavenly virtues, whereby he may grow into a nearer and nearer conformity to the will and likeness of the holy author of his being. In short this is the process, which saint Peter most exactly describes, when, speaking of the exceeding great and precious promises, which are given unto us in the gospel, he says, that the end of all the promises is this, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption, that is in the world through lust.

Let us therefore first inquire generally, leaving a more particular investigation for the sequel, what is that course of sanctification and renewal, which the bible prescribes to us, that we may thus be put upon our guard against any of those mistakes, by which men ever have been, and still are withheld from coming to the true physician of souls !

It has already been observed, that, when the affections have been deranged, they cannot be restored, except by the exhibition of a new motive : and the motive, which the gospel presents for that purpose, is indeed itself of a nature, fitted to rouse the dullest affection, and to stimulate the most torpid feeling into activity. Accordingly it addresses us in language, which anticipates such a result, saying to us with a voice, which seems, like that of the last trumpet, to command death and the grave—' Awake, 'thou, that sleepest, and arise from the dead! and ' Christ shall give thee light.'

It has also been stated, that the first step in the revival of a fallen soul must come from without. The influence must proceed from another. It

cannot spring from itself. Accordingly the first step, which the bible reveals, for the sanctification of a sinner, is taken by the son of God himself, by him, who, coming forth from the bosom of the Father, and condescending to assume our nature, was made like unto his brethren in all things, except sin. The son of God, arrayed in mortal flesh, and taking his station among men, as one of their number, subject to their infirmities, and liable to their temptations, set us a perfect example of obedience to the law of God, and was truly even in human form his image and glory. He did indeed know God. He loved him with an affection beyond earthly love; and he loved those also, whom he graciously vouchsafed to regard, as his neighbours and brethren, so well, that he even gave up himself for their benefit.

But this perfect example, had that been all, would have shamed instead of saving us. It would have shewn us in a living pattern, how we ought to have lived, and to please God. But instead of enabling us to do so, it would only have set before us in clearer contrast the height, from which we had fallen, and taught

us to fear and to feel, that it was utterly impossible for us ever to remeasure the distance.

Our lord accordingly did not rest here. This was necessary for us, but not sufficient. Before man can return to God, he must know, that God is willing to receive him with favour; and of that he cannot be convinced, until he knows, that his sins are forgiven: and here therefore lies a difficulty in the very way of his return, which none, but God himself, can remove. Who can remit sins, but God only? That is the first difficulty. But even to his forgiveness of sins there are apparent obstacles in the very holiness of the divine administration, which nothing, less than the divine wisdom, acting in conjunction with divine love, could overcome.

Jesus Christ therefore, to surmount this impediment, became himself an atonement for sinners. He gave his life, a ransom for many. He died for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. God is even said to have made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Can any motive to gratitude, any incentive

to love be imagined, equal to this? If a debtor, pining in a dungeon, were suddenly released in consequence of some benevolent stranger having defrayed all, that he owed,—if a prisoner, working in chains, were discharged from confinement through the payment of his ransom by some person, who felt for his sufferings,—if, to adopt a still closer comparison, a soldier in battle, who had to cross the range of a particular gun, were saved from death by a comrade, who purposely placed himself between him and the instrument of destruction, could any of these persons fail to love his benefactor? Yet all these instances of nobleness and generosity would fall infinitely short of the grace of the saviour: for, though it be true, that for a good man some would even dare to die, Christ Jesus died not for a good man, but for sinners, not for a friend, but for enemies, not for those, who deserved his compassion, but for men, who had abused his goodness, and provoked his wrath. Nay. The creator died for the creature. He, who was the absolute lord and sovereign of us all, paid the penalty, which by righteous sentence was due to transgressors, that his

rebellious servants and subjects might be spared.

Surely, when this love is brought home to an awakened conscience, it must excite love in return. We love, we cannot refrain from loving him, because he first loved us. The bosom, which felt its love to God grow cool, and its love to man turn selfish, kindles into gratitude, when it hears of such godlike goodness, such surpassing mercy.

It is indeed too true, that this motive is continually presented to the natural heart without awakening it from its torpor. It has become insensible to spiritual impression, and hears, and sees, and knows what is best adapted to rouse it to new energy, without regarding it, as it ought: and this is a consideration, which opens a new chapter in the history of the human mind to our serious reflection; for it proves further the necessity of not only exhibiting the motive, but also of preparing the mind to receive it in order to its deliverance from the captivity of sin. Thus the historian of the acts of the apostles informs us concerning Lydia, that the Lord opened her heart, that she attended unto

the things, which were spoken by Paul. The stony heart must be softened, the callous feeling renewed; or the pleadings of divine mercy will be urged in vain. This, however it may be accomplished, is necessary in order to gain admittance for the new and regenerating motive, and to give it efficacy and power.

When however this effect, by whatever means it may be attained, is once produced, when this decayed and expiring sentiment is once reawakened in the heart, then at length the first difficulty in the way of conversion is overcome. The backsliding child is willing to return. Finding that his offended God is ready to forgive, nay, that he has resorted to so costly a sacrifice in order to make the exercise of mercy compatible with the claims of justice, he no longer stands at a distance, but becomes desirous to draw near: for he reasons—'If the 'Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not 'have shewed us all these things. Nay. Ra- 'ther he, that spared not his own son, but de- 'livered him up for us all, how shall he not 'with him also freely give us all things?'

But this is not all, that is wanted. The sin-

ner indeed, under this influence, is made willing. But he is not made whole. Though his past guilt has been cancelled, and he is willing to return to God, how can he now with his contracted powers, his imperfect knowledge, and his disordered affections serve him, as he did, before he fell, or love him with that glad and undoubting confidence, which his law presumes and requires?

It is evident, that he cannot do it: and therefore, to encourage him under his despondency, and dispose him still to return notwithstanding his fears and his frailty, he is cheered by a most gracious promise:—'Return, ye backsliding chil-'dren! and I will heal your backslidings. That, 'which you cannot do for yourselves, I will do 'for you. I will undertake your cure. I will 'restore your integrity. I will recover your soul. 'Try, as you will, to recover yourselves! Trust, 'if you can venture to do so, to your own energy 'and virtue for reascending the height, from 'which you have sunk! You will find at last, 'that I alone, and not your own right hand, can 'save you. I, even I, am the Lord; and besides 'me there is no saviour. Look unto me, and be

‘ ye saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am ‘ God, and there it none else. Come unto me, ‘ all ye, that are weary and heavy-laden! and I ‘ will give you rest.’

How then is this healing process, which was begun by the atonement on the cross of the saviour, to be carried on? How is the work of sanctification, which is to cure the vice of nature, and restore it to original righteousness and purity, to be matured, and brought to perfection?

Now it has pleased God to reveal this to us also. Christ reconciled us by his death. But he saves us by his life. Having risen from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and taken his seat at the right hand of the father, he there pleads the cause of his people, and sends down thence into their hearts his holy Spirit, without which they would have remained deaf to the invitations of his goodness, to renew their souls to obedience.

It is thus, that the influence of Satan, which occasioned the fall, meets with a counteracting influence of superior potency: for greater is he, that is in us, than he, that is in the world. The

holy and gracious spirit, that dwelt in Jesus, dwells in his disciples also, to subdue the spirit of rebellion, and to implant the spirit of love : for the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the holy Ghost, which is given unto them.

But this is a gradual operation, a spark, rising into a flame, and gathering more and more strength, till it consumes the sordid dregs of natural corruption, and burns upon the altar of our heart, like the fire, that descended from Heaven.

How then is this work to be advanced ? How is the flame to be nursed and fed, how guarded from extinction, and fanned into brightness and vigour ?

This indeed is the great business of the christian life. It consists, as saint Paul describes it, of two parts, to put off the old man, and to put on the new, to mortify the original nature, in which we were born, and to cultivate, strengthen, and nourish the new nature, which is communicated by regeneration : and these two operations must be carried forward together ; for it is by putting on the new man, that we best learn to put off the old ; or in other words it is by exer-

cising the properties and virtues of our renewed nature, that we get rid more and more of the propensities, dispositions, and vices, which belong to our fallen condition. It is, when a tree puts forth its fresh leaves in the spring, that any decayed remnants of a former vegetation fall off, as a matter of course.

Still this is a change of stupendous magnitude, affecting all the faculties and dispositions of the soul, and entering into the production, and influencing the character of every action. As the first impulse, which disposes us to return to God, was from above, so the maintenance of that new action in all its consistency and power requires a divine strength, to accomplish it, and can only be brought about by the agency of the holy Spirit. Hence arises the necessity of continual prayer for guidance and blessing, as an element in the divine life, which can never be dispensed with: for the holy Spirit is only promised in answer to prayer, and, being needed by us for every duty, requires to be solicited by perpetual prayer.

The work is also one, which in the second place is encountered by manifold temptations. The remainder of original sin, which can only be

extinguished by degrees, will find in every circumstance of life a temptation, which will prompt it to renewed activity, and thus hinder the work, which ought to make progress : and again, the weakness of the implanted principle in its commencement and infancy renders it easy for us to miss, or to neglect, and even not to discern or apprehend opportunities for doing the work of God, which his providence continually places in our way, and by which it is his will, that the talent, which he has bestowed upon us, should be brought into use, and improved. Both these causes, alike retarding us in running the race, that is set before us, call for perpetual vigilance, to guard against the danger, and invigorate our flagging energies to renewed exertion.

Hence we see the wisdom of our blessed lord's caution to his disciples—' Watch, and pray ! ' Watch your own hearts, and pray for divine assistance !

These are the two simple expedients, to which we have need always to resort in order to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our lord and saviour, Jesus Christ. They are the two essential elements, which, after we have repented of

sin, we have still to use in the daily process of sanctification. They are the means, by which we obtain the continual aid of the divine spirit, who alone sanctifies: for by watchfulness we keep away those evils, which would provoke the holy spirit, and by prayer we invite his entrance.

There are many other acts and graces, essential to the life of a christian, which demand a separate investigation. Indeed the particulars, on which our watchfulness must be exercised, and the objects, to which our prayers must be directed, give scope for much discrimination and judgment: and then the many helps to devotion, which are afforded by the word of God, read and preached, by the sacraments, and by the sabbath, all require to be considered, if we would understand the nature of that process, through which the Lord heals his once backsliding, but now returning children.

On all these points indeed grievous mistakes are made. Men have in all ages been prone to invent for themselves ways of returning to God instead of simply submitting themselves to his righteousness, and to the methods, which he has devised for their recovery. The necessity of

some change in the character of all men in order to render them what they ought to be is too obvious not to have been admitted by considerate and reflecting persons in every age and country : and therefore a process of sanctification of some sort and by some means seems always to have appeared to the common sense of mankind essential to their final happiness and perfection. Christians of course cannot but perceive, that the necessity of it is inculcated in scripture : and yet even christians have differed, and still differ in their notions of that sanctification, which the scriptures require.

The grand cause of these differences, when the scriptures themselves are clear and explicit, is the reluctance, which the human heart, not yet weaned from the corrupt influences of the fall, feels, to the way of sanctification, which the bible reveals for its guidance, and its consequent readiness to escape from a conviction of its truth.

That the true way of sanctification may be accurately discerned, and that we may be duly on our guard against every perversion of it, we may next proceed to trace some of the errors, which in successive ages have prevailed on this subject,

and then lastly to state and demonstrate, so far as we may, by the light of scripture, the true course, which is there pointed out for our return to God.

In the mean time this may be premised, as the result of our enquiry, so far as it has been conducted hitherto. Man is fallen in Adam. If he is ever to recover from this state of degradation, he must for that purpose again learn to obey the law, which he has broken. But this he cannot do with dimished powers and depraved propensities. In order therefore to surmount these disabilities, he needs first a hope of acceptance, and secondly spiritual assistance: and happily for him the first of these is afforded him by the atonement of Christ, and the second by his gift of the holy Spirit. Thus is Christ constituted a new head to the human race; and it becomes necessary for us to be engrafted into him, as we were once united to Adam. The union to Adam was effected by nature. The union to Christ must be produced by grace.

This then is the general outline, which we shall have hereafter to fill up, when we come to look more minutely into the course, through

which we must pass in being translated from the sinfulness of nature to the holiness of God.

The work indeed is arduous: for it is a work above and against nature. It is called in scripture a fight, a conflict, a warfare. But, if the work be great, how much greater is the end, how inconceivably great the reward! If we aim at nothing less than the recovery of that divine image and likeness, from which we have fallen, if we are contented with nothing less, as the end of our pursuit, than sinless perfection, how glorious will be the victory, how transcendant the joy and blessedness, when it shall have been attained! 'To him that overcometh, will I 'give,' (saith the Lord) 'to eat of the tree of 'life, which is in the midst of the paradise of 'God. The pure in heart shall see God. 'When he shall appear, we shall be like him: for 'we shall see him, as he is.' To be made like unto the son of God, to resemble our perfect redeemer, to be presented, faultless, before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy—well may we endure pain and self-denial by the way, if such is to be the happy end of it: for then the last stain of sin will be purged away, and

the redeemed and purified sinner will stand forth again, as the image and glory of God, qualified through his beauty, which is bestowed on him, to see, to enjoy, to hold hallowed and uninterrupted communion with his creator. Then will the work of God be perfected, and the victory of the cross complete. Then will the son of God see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, when the righteous shall shine forth, as the sun, in the kingdom of their father.

Thus, my brethren, as it is written, that, when the maimed and the sick came, to touch the hem of our saviour's garment, every one, who touched, was made perfectly whole, so they, who return to God in the way of his appointment through Christ by the spirit, will be healed of their spiritual malady. They will be made perfectly whole.

May we all have wisdom to discern, and grace to follow this only path of peace and safety, that we may also experience the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls !

SERMON IV.

ISAIAH XLIV. 20.

A deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say—'Is there not 'a lie in my right hand?'

THE promise of a redeemer was immediately consequent upon the fall. It was conveyed indeed in obscure terms, but yet in terms, quite adequate to the purpose, for which they were designed, namely to that of teaching Adam and Eve to repose an undoubting confidence upon the power, wisdom, and goodness, which were pledged for their deliverance. It was not necessary, or even desirable to this end, that they should know explicitly the manner, in which their reconciliation and consequent deliverance were to be effected. They had disbelieved the word of the Lord, which made death the penalty of transgression. They were required now to rely on the word of promise, which made righteousness the reward of their faith.

Accordingly the only language, in which the promise of a future redeemer was conveyed to them, was that mysterious declaration, addressed too not to them, but to the serpent—'I will put 'enmity between thee and the woman, and be-'tween thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise 'thy head; and thou shalt bruise his heel.'

There was enough in this promise to cheer their trembling hearts with the assurance, that at some future day the head of the serpent, who had ruined them, should be bruised, and that the deliverer, who should achieve this victory, would be the seed of the woman. In all this they could see nothing distinctly. Still less could they see in the qualifying clause, which followed it, that the serpent should bruise his heel. But they saw in it a distant promise of a future deliverer: and that was enough. That promise was guaranteed to them by the word of the Lord, a word, the truth of which they began now to experience, and were thus led to believe: and in this manner they were trained from the very beginning to walk by faith, and not by sight. There was an apparent fitness in the remedy to correct the disease: for as they had sinned through unbe-

lief, so it was ordained, that henceforward they should be restored through faith.

Still this faith, however obscure, rested from the very first on a future deliverer, nay, more, on a human deliverer, on one, who was to conquer the enemy, who had prevailed against them, and who was by his own sufferings in some way, as yet unknown, because unrevealed, to accomplish their salvation. How exact a shadow, though still but a shadow, an outline of that great truth, so fully bodied out in the new testament, where we read—‘ For this ‘ purpose the son of God was manifested, that ‘ he might destroy the works of the devil. He ‘ took part of flesh and blood, that through death ‘ he might destroy him, that had the power of ‘ death. That is the devil.’— : and therefore ‘ the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your ‘ feet shortly.’— !

This reliance however upon a future saviour implied three things, distrust of themselves, faith in the promises of God, and a disposition to place themselves under his direction and guidance : and it is evident, that these three qualities had a direct tendency, so far as they were

possessed, to rectify the evils, which occasioned the fall; for that first offence sprang from confidence in themselves, distrust of God, and a refusal to be guided by his authority. Had our first parents and their descendants lived thenceforward in this spirit, they would have been gradually led to that simple dependence upon God in all things, which would have ensured his promised blessing.

But, whatever may have been the conduct of Adam and of Eve, of whom we are not forbidden to trust, that they repented of their sin, and were received into mercy, the world at large did not so. Cain and his family fell off from the true God; the sons of Seth were corrupted by evil connexions; and at length the earth was filled with violence. The promised saviour was consequently forgotten. Men studied only their own personal enjoyment and comfort in the present world, and thus provoked the Lord to sweep away one whole generation by a flood.

Even before this in the first offering of Cain there was a plain indication of this forgetfulness of the promise. His offering was from the fruits of the ground, a mere thank-offering, which im-

plied a forgetfulness of that truth, which seems to have been inculcated from the very time of the fall, and even to be intimated in the provision of the skins of beasts for their clothing, that without shedding of blood is no remission. There was consequently in this offering no act of faith in the future redeemer, but a mere acknowledgment of the divine bounty: and thus the first specimen was exhibited of that method of sanctification, which men have invented for themselves, a method, by which they virtually declared themselves their own saviours, and seek to return to God by acts and services, which can never take away sin.

The very rejected offering of Cain itself shews, that men, even when they disregard the method, which the divine wisdom has appointed, and harbour in their bosom malignant feelings, which are contrary to his will, cannot be satisfied without some form of religious worship, whether it be, that they regard devotional services, as some atonement for moral offences, or that they cannot altogether rid themselves of the notion, that something in the nature of an expression of homage and subjection is due to the Deity. It

cannot therefore well be thought, that, while the sons of Seth invoked by the name, Jehovah, the daughters of Cain, with whom they afterwards contracted alliances, if that be the true interpretation of the inter-marriages between the sons of God and the daughters of men, recorded in the sixth chapter of Genesis, had abandoned all external regard to the forms of religion. What their notions on the subject were, we have no means of knowing. But, if they had any sense of religion, while yet the earth was filled with violence through them, and at length became altogether corrupted, they must have had a notion of sanctification, or of becoming reconciled to God, which is altogether at variance with his revealed will.

But, when the returning flood had renewed the face of the earth, and mankind began to be propagated, as it were, from a second original, we have a little more light thrown upon the page of sacred history, and are enabled to distinguish some portion of the form and lineaments of those superstitions, which soon again took the place of real religion.

The brief account, which we possess, of Nim-

rod, indicates, that violence began to overspread the earth again ; and the building of the tower of Babel implies a daring attempt to counteract the purposes and resist the declared will of the most high. But in the last chapter of the book of Joshua we are told, that Terah, the father of Abraham, served other gods, when he lived in Chaldæa ; and it is intimated there, that these were different gods from those, which were worshipped in Egypt and in Canaan.

Here then we for the first time distinctly trace that awful and most humiliating crime of idolatry, which by a strange infatuation seems for so many ages to have deluded all nations, and is still the prevailing sin of many. The forms of idolatry indeed are infinitely diversified: and of the form, which first deceived mankind, we have some obscure hints in the early records of the bible. Thus, when Job in the solemn protestation of his innocence recounts the various descriptions of wickedness, from which he had kept himself clear, the only crime against the purity of religious worship, to which he alludes, is thus delineated. ‘ If’—says he—‘ I beheld the sun, ‘ when it shined, or the moon, walking in bright-

‘ ness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed,
‘ or my mouth hath kissed my hand, this were
‘ an iniquity to be punished by the judge ; for I
‘ should have denied the God, that is above.’

It seems to follow almost undeniably from this passage, that the first created beings, which were worshipped upon earth, were those great lights, which God hath set in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day, and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. It was a fearful descent from acknowledging only the universal creator to bow down before any, even the most glorious of his creatures, much more then to yield divine honours to an inanimate luminary, which must be perfectly insensible to the homage, paid to it. But this descent, once made, proceeded at an accelerated rate, till men came to worship the animals, which were subjected to their dominion, the plants, which grew by their cultivation, or even senseless images, which their own hands had made. It is difficult to conceive a degree of degradation to the human intellect below that, which is exposed with sacred ridicule by the inspired prophet, who exclaims—‘ The

‘ carpenter stretcheth out his rule. He marketh
‘ it out with a line. He fitteth it with planes ;
‘ and he marketh it out with the compass, and
‘ maketh it after the figure of a man according to
‘ the beauty of a man, that it may remain in the
‘ house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh
‘ the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth
‘ for himself among the trees of the forest. He
‘ planteth an oak ; and the rain doth nourish it.
‘ Then shall it be for a man to burn : for he will
‘ take thereof, and warm himself. Yea. He
‘ kindleth it, and baketh bread. Yea. He
‘ maketh a god, and worshippeth it. He maketh
‘ it a graven image, and falleth down thereto.
‘ He burneth part thereof in the fire. With
‘ part thereof he eateth flesh. He roasteth
‘ roast, and is satisfied. Yea. He warmeth
‘ himself, and saith—“ Aha ! I am warm, I have
“ seen the fire.”—: and the residue thereof he
‘ maketh a god, even his graven image. He
‘ falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and
‘ prayeth unto it, and saith—“ Deliver me ! For
“ thou art my god.” They have not known,
‘ nor understood : for he hath shut their eyes,
‘ that they cannot see, and their hearts, that they

‘ cannot understand; and none considereth in ‘ his heart; neither is there knowledge, nor un- ‘ derstanding, to say—“ I have burned part of it “ in the fire. Yea. Also I have baked bread “ upon the coals thereof. I have roasted flesh, “ and eaten it: and shall I make the residue “ thereof an abomination? Shall I fall down to “ the stock of a tree? ”—He feedeth on ashes. ‘ A deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he ‘ cannot deliver his soul, nor say—“ Is there not “ a lie in my right hand? ”

But the degradation, thus entailed upon the powers of the mind, when exercised towards God, did not come alone. It was accompanied, if not occasioned, by other proofs of degeneracy. Thus, if men do not like, as saint Paul says, to retain God in their knowledge, it is, because they are unwilling to perform, and because it is in that case inconvenient to know without performing their whole duty to him; and, if they are reluctant to perform their whole duty to God, it is for the same reason found inconvenient to perform their whole duty to man. The whole system of the divine commandments hangs together; and the indisposition to comply with any

part of it arises from a selfish desire of present ease, or present enjoyment, which is incompatible with those personal efforts or sacrifices, which an all-controlling principle of love would prompt or require. Thus the practice of idolatry springs from a secret dislike to the spiritual service of a holy God, and a desire to find in the object of worship one, who will not be too exact to know what is done amiss. If a few outward services to a dumb idol will make compensation for any neglect of the rules of morality, if any expenditure, or penance, or occasional act of self-denial, still more, if any pompous ceremony, or showy pageant will satisfy the demands of religion, surely it must be seen, that fallen human nature is a gainer by substituting a creature for the creator, as the object of its adoration.

Accordingly this is the true history of idolatry in all parts of the world. The votaries of an idol form all their plans of action irrespectively of the will of any deity, and then call upon their idol to help them by sacrificing a victim at present, and vowing an offering hereafter. A lively picture of this method of worship is drawn in the twenty-first chapter of Ezekiel, where the

prophet writes—‘ The king of Babylon stood at ‘ the parting of the way, at the head of the two ‘ ways, to use divination. He made his arrows ‘ bright. He consulted with images. He looked ‘ in the liver. At his right hand was the divina- ‘ tion for Jerusalem, to appoint captains, to open ‘ the mouth in the slaughter, to lift up the voice ‘ with shouting, to appoint battering rams against ‘ the gates, to cast a mount, and to build a fort.’ Here we see a great king, conducting a powerful army, and then using divination, not to ascertain, whether the enterprise, in which he was engaged, was lawful, but whether it would succeed, to learn, which of two courses, which were both open to him, would prosper. The main undertaking was already determined ; and the arrows, and images, and liver were consulted, only to assist an unsettled deliberation, and give confidence to adventure. It was thus, that every general resorted to some method of augury or enchantment before an action. He was often fettered by it in some of the details of a campaign, but formed the campaign itself at the command of his country, or at the dictate of his own ambition. As the image of Jupiter or

Mars or Minerva could tell him nothing, he sought to gather the will of the gods, in whom he professed to believe, from the flight of birds, or the entrails of animals, or the chance of a lot, but yet sought to know this will rather, as an auxiliary to his enterprise, than as a corrective of his purpose. Balak engaged Balaam, as an eminent enchanter, to pronounce words of divination, to which he attributed the power of blasting, or of prospering the machinations of his enemies. He evidently regarded the prophet, not as a holy, but as a powerful man, who without reference to the justice of a cause could influence at will the issues of war. 'Behold!' —said he. 'There is a people, come out of 'Egypt; and they abide over against me. Come 'now therefore! Curse me this people! For 'they are too mighty for me. Peradventure I 'shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that 'I may drive them out of the land: for I wot, 'that he, whom thou blessest, is blessed, and he, 'whom thou cursest, is cursed.'

Hence, whether the object, which they worshipped was a senseless idol, an inanimate creature, or a deified hero, the idea of holiness was

no way connected with it. Homer attributes to his gods all the passions, nay, and the very vices of men : and even Herodotus, who was no inventor of fictions, whatever may be the character of some of his narratives, has no scruple in introducing Solon, the wise legislator of Athens, pronouncing the whole race of the gods to be both envious and malignant, τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐὸν φθόνερον τε καὶ ταραχῶδες. The fables, which are related of many of the heathen deities, are such as must have been destructive of all reverence for their character, as beings, who excelled mankind in any moral excellence : and hence the idea of practising virtue, as serving to recommend them to their gods, could not in the nature of things be very seriously entertained. Some heinous crimes indeed those powerful rulers would resent and punish. But they could not be expected to be very severe towards faults, to which they were themselves prone, and were commonly believed to act upon a principle of favoritism, and to be better pleased with costly offerings, than patrons of true excellence and virtue. Thus the very notion of sanctification, or of acquiring a higher degree of moral goodness ceased to be an element

in heathen religion: nor can we wonder, if in consequence of this defect the character of the heathen world came at length to be that, which is described by saint Paul in his first chapter to the Romans. 'Because, when they knew God, 'they glorified him not, as God, neither were 'thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, 'and changed the glory of the incorruptible God 'into an image, made like to corruptible man, 'and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creep-'ing things, God also gave them up to unclean-'ness through the lusts of their own hearts, 'being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, 'wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness,' and that frightful train of further evils, which makes up the sequel of his picture.

And, if we turn from the idolatry of the ancient world to that of the modern, we shall not find its character improved, or its tendency altered.

Even in the Romish church the adoration, which, under whatever modification, is paid to the virgin, and to the saints, springs from the same origin. It springs from a desire to address in prayer not exclusively one, who was in all points tempted, like as we are, yet without sin,

but one, who was originally a partaker of a fallen nature, like ourselves, although in the course of time the natural disposition to exalt the object of our worship produced the fiction of the blessed virgin, Mary, the destined mother of our lord, having been exempted from the taint of original sin. But the voluntary humility, as saint Paul calls it, which led men at that early age to the worshipping of angels, and at a later age to the worshipping of canonized men, though it have at all times a show of wisdom in will-worship, and be often accompanied with an ostentatious neglecting of the body, is in fact a device of Satan, by which a sinner is enabled to select his patron-saint, from whom he may naturally hope for some indulgence to his frailties, and to address him in prayer in preference to the essentially holy God, who cannot look on iniquity.

And then, if we pass to the heathen world at the present day, whether we observe the abominations of buddhism, or hindooism, or advert to the innumerable deities of China, or the impurities of Juggernaut, we see every where a forgetfulness of the awful character of a holy God, and an effort to satisfy, or rather to silence the

clamours of an uneasy conscience by expensive offerings, or laborious pilgrimages, or painful penances, or suicidal practices, or even, as the prophet, Micah, expresses it, by giving the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul. It would be as unnecessary as it must be offensive to enter into particulars on this subject. To a christian mind the whole ceremonial of idolatry, wherever practised, or however modified, conveys the conviction, that it is impossible to depart from the simple knowledge of the one true and righteous God without losing much of that just perception of right and wrong even in matters of human intercourse, on which the comfort and peace and security of society depend. In heathen nations even at the present day there is no confidence between man and man in the integrity of each other; and hence all confederacies are soon broken down by mutual jealousy and distrust: and this is the real cause of that moral ascendancy, which christians with all their admitted faults have obtained over heathen nations with all their boasted virtues. It is the secret of the British empire in India; and it is also the source of that moral superiority, which has at different

times been observed in the protestant states on the continent of Europe, and even in the protestant cantons of Switzerland.

Amidst all the varied forms however of idolatry, which have prevailed, and still prevail, in the world, it is impossible on the present occasion to forbear from taking especial notice of one, which marks its author. I mean the honour, which has frequently been bestowed on the serpent. To this must be added the disposition in many nations to invest the object of worship with terror, and to regard him rather, as the author of evil than of good, and thence rather to propitiate his anger than to solicit his favour. Do not these concurring particulars prepare us for the statement of the apostle, that the things, which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, not to God? Do they not illustrate the meaning of our saviour, when he speaks of the devil and his legions, banded together in a strict alliance against the human race, and forming an united kingdom among themselves? Do they not shew the strict propriety of the expressions of the apostles, when they call the devil the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air,

the spirit, that now worketh in the children of disobedience ? and do they not almost justify the language of that evil spirit himself, when he said in the arrogance of his presumption to our blessed lord in his hour of temptation—' The kingdoms of the world and the ' glory of them are delivered unto me, and unto ' whomsoever I will, I give them.'— ?

Yet his empire is established not by might, but by fraud. It was by deception, that he prevailed over Eve ; and it is still the character, ascribed to him in the book of revelation, that he deceiveth the whole world. We are cautioned, not against his power, (for it is said to every christian—' Resist the devil ! and he will flee ' from you '—), but against his wiles and devices, against his lying wonders, and his ingenious subtlety. He misleads the judgment of men, tempting them to call evil good, and good evil. In particular he disguises from them the bitterness and hatefulness of sin, and represents it, especially to the youthful mind, as a thing, that is sweet and pleasant, being conducive to the cheerfulness, and consequently to the happiness of life, till at length, as Isaiah describes his case in the text, a

deceived heart turns him aside, and he cannot deliver his soul. The enemy of his salvation has entangled him in a delusive snare, and thus taken him captive at his will.

But the great effect, which he labors to produce by all these contrivances of cunning craftiness, whereby he lieth in wait, to deceive, is to destroy that aspiration after holiness, through which alone a fallen creature can hope, as saint Paul expresses it, to recover himself out of his snare : and this he accomplishes by various methods of delusion. False notions in religion, superstitious observances, apostasy from God, and the worship of himself under different disguises, these are not his only expedients for deceiving and depraving the heart of man. The blandishments of pleasure, the cares of life, the glitter of wealth, the pressure of distress, the fascination of power, the resentment of injury, in short all, that attracts, and all, that disquiets the heart of man in its present state of degeneracy, are woven by him into his web of seduction ; and all lend their aid to that great artifice, by which he contrives to draw off the minds of the perishing sons of

Adam from attention to the one thing, that is needful. The heart, when so deceived as to regard every thing else, or any thing else, as of more pressing importance to it than its own renewal in that holiness and purity, in which alone it can ever hope again to see God, turns its possessor aside continually from taking a right view of his condition and prospects, so that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say—'Is 'there not a lie in my right hand? Am I not, 'whatever be my religious profession, making 'riches, or pleasure, or some earthly thing my 'idol, instead of loving him with all my heart, 'from whom my breath is, and whose will is the 'law of my being?' This is what St. Paul describes by the phrase of being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance, that is in us because of the blindness of our hearts. It is thus, that, the understanding being darkened, every form of error finds easy entrance and acceptance, and can only be dispelled by the effulgence of the light of truth. The god of this world blinds the minds of them, which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine

unto them ; and the Lord may justly say to them in the language, addressed to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans—' Thou sayest—" I am rich, and increased with goods, and have " need of nothing "—, and knowest not, that ' thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, ' and blind, and naked '

Hence it is found, that, although the promise of a redeemer was given immediately after the fall, the desire of it, and consequently the recollection of it came in time to be almost obliterated. Mankind at large sought it not, thought not of it ; and hence it ceased to be regarded by the mass of men, as an object of hope, or a motive of conduct. Men flattered themselves, that they were good enough, without referring their conduct to any correct standard of excellence ; or they invented ways of expiation or amendment, calculated to deceive themselves or others, but not to advance them towards the restoration of their character to its primitive integrity.

It remains next to inquire, what opinions their wise men and philosophers formed, or entertained concerning the method of sanctification.

This accordingly will be the subject of the next lecture.

In the mean time may it please our heavenly Father to preserve us by his special grace from every form of error, that we ourselves may be privileged to know his will, and see with the eye of faith that just one, and hear the voice of his mouth !

SERMON V.

1 CORINTHIANS I. 21.

The world by wisdom knew not God.

We have now seen, how universally the knowledge of the true God declined in the world after the flood. Yet mankind have never been able to banish altogether from their minds the idea of a supreme governor: and hence arose the monstrous error of idolatry, by which the great seducer has succeeded to a wonderful extent in blinding the understandings of men, and thus leading them, because something must needs be worshipped, and they had forsaken the true God, to worship almost every created thing in the place of God. But of all idols that, which marks most distinctly the true origin and author of idolatry, as was observed in the last lecture, is the adoration, which has often been paid to the serpent, the very creature, whose subtlety was rendered instrumental to our fall,

and by the selection of which the tempter obtained his triumph.

Yet the palpable unreasonableness of idol-worship is too gross not to have offended the judgment of those, whose understandings were cultivated, and who had at all accustomed themselves to the investigation of truth, or of nature. Accordingly many ingenious subterfuges were invented by learned men, to cover its absurdity, as for instance, that the worship paid to an image, was only symbolical, the real homage being designed for him, whom the image represented, that different idols, honored in different places, signified different perfections in the one supreme being, and that mankind at large, being immersed in objects of sense, could never maintain a truly spiritual service, except, as it is clothed under sensible images: and thus it was, that, while philosophers conformed to the existing idolatry, they exposed, and excused its folly. But the excuse will not serve the purpose, for which it is pleaded, inasmuch as several of the heathen deities were so far from being suitable representatives of any perfection in the one supreme God, that they were rather personifications of

human vices. Such were Mars, Mercury, and Venus; and the fables, freely promulgated concerning other heathen gods, were such as to extirpate all notions of religious reverence from minds, which either believed them, or, not believing them, could be contented to pay to such characters the honour, due to God.

Still the notions, which heathen sages or philosophers entertained, of God and godliness, form a distinct subject of inquiry, and one, which cannot be omitted, when we are trying to discover, what opinions have prevailed among men concerning the way to repair the vices and follies of humanity.

It is however very curious, and not a little satisfactory, to observe, how all these notions, even the best of them, which the wisest of the ancient Greeks taught, and which they even seemed to discover by the force of reasoning, are found to connect themselves by tradition with the original revelation of God: for all the philosophy of Greece appears to have been engrafted upon discoveries, imported from Egypt and the east, as afterwards it came in the progress of events to be transmitted to Italy and the west.

Yet the learned men, who thus imparted to their countrymen the result of their researches, were unwilling to shock the prevailing idolatry by a plain and unequivocal publication of the truths, which they had collected by foreign travel: and therefore they either disguised them in fiction, or reserved them for the ear of a chosen few after a period of probation, or divided their whole scheme of doctrine into esoteric and exoteric for the initiated and the uninitiated.

Thus, when Pythagoras had returned from Egypt, and settled at Crotona, he is said to have imposed upon his disciples four or five years of silence, before he would admit them to a full disclosure of the whole system of truth, to the knowledge of which he had himself attained. The same explanation is probably to be given of the original institution of those mysteries of Ceres, which were taught under the most solemn injunctions of secrecy: and so a precedent was established, for that communication of knowledge to a particular class, to be approved by the instructor, which pervaded the principal schools of philosophy in Greece, and tended to inflate the privileged sophists with an arrogant assumption of superiority.

But what were the opinions, thus taught by the ancient philosophers, on the nature of God, and the means, by which man may come to be accepted by him?

The mystery, with which, as has just been observed, they purposely surrounded their doctrine, hinders us from distinctly apprehending their opinions on these important questions. Nevertheless enough is preserved in some of the writings of antiquity, to shew, what was their prevailing tone of sentiment in matters, relating to God.

Of Pherecydes, or his disciple, Pythagoras, who were the first of them, (for the seven wise men of Greece, as they are called, have left no system of theology, or of morals), we know but little, except, that they introduced from the east the forgotten doctrine of the soul's immortality, and engrafted upon it the fable of transmigration. Their moral maxims, so far as we possess any trace of them, tend rather to restrain from vice than to eradicate it by the implantation of a higher and holier principle, while in respect to religion they appear evidently to

have sanctioned the plurality of gods, worshipped among their countrymen.

Indeed the unity of the Godhead had become so obscured by the worship of false deities, that not one of the philosophers of the heathen can be said to have held it in its purity : and, when the idea of God himself was so corrupted, how was it possible to form any correct notions of the proper method of approaching him? Those, who felt the unreasonableness of polytheism, had yet no conception of the absolute holiness of God. Some indeed held him to be a being without beginning or end, a pure spirit, a subtle æther, a disposing mind, the former of the universe. But yet there was none of them, who regarded him, as its absolute creator, because for the most part they believed matter, or the material, from which the universe is formed, to be eternal, and to be a perpetual impediment to his operations, being in fact an antagonist principle, which the supreme being was not powerful enough to destroy. Others again taught the mystical doctrine, which is still perpetuated in the Brahminical superstition of India, that God is himself the universe, perva-

ding it, as the mind animates the body, so, that every particle of matter is not so much the creature of God as a part of his substance, while Plato, although, amidst much metaphysical speculation and much conjectural dogmatism, he has frequent flashes of a fine conception concerning Deity, a conception, which, had it been followed up to its truly legitimate consequence, that those, who worship God, must worship him in spirit and in truth, might have opened the way to the scriptural doctrine of sanctification, though not to the scriptural method of obtaining it, invents a theogony of his own creation, and ascribes the government of the world rather to the agency of intermediate dæmons than to the sole authority of one all-seeing and all-pervading God. In general indeed it may be observed, that the supreme being, however described, was left by the ancient philosophers on a solitary throne, unencumbered with the cares, and unconcerned about the proceedings of the world, it being thought, that, if he regarded them, the evil, which prevails in them, must disturb his peace, and that consequently his happiness must consist in an unfeeling and imperturbable apathy.

Of course the morality, which connects itself with these vague speculations, must want a basis to rest upon: for we entirely lose in them the idea of an omniscient governor, who searches the hearts and the reins, directs all things according to the counsel of his own will, and will hereafter bring all things into judgment, whether they be good, or whether they be evil. The fables of Minos and Rhadamanthus, or the Egyptian theories of retribution will not supply the place of such a governor, to whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid, even if they obtained belief. But the very tenet of the soul's immortality, notwithstanding the pretension of Plato to demonstrate it by an argument, which will equally prove its eternity, was doubted, or disbelieved: and without this all religion is vain.

But our present business is to inquire, what were the actual notions, inculcated by the chief heathen philosophers, concerning the moral condition of mankind, and the means of improving it.

It cannot be expected, that in this place all the numberless shades of opinion, entertained by

the various sects of heathen philosophers, and by all seceders from the different schools, should be examined, or even mentioned. Cicero has counted up a great variety of opinions on the chief good; and in the fondness for speculation, which prevailed among them upon the deepest and darkest questions, which without revelation were incapable of solution, it may well be said, that they bewildered themselves instead of informing their hearers,

> And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.

One sentiment however was common to most of them, that all evil is a counteraction of the design of nature, and that consequently whatever is contrary to human happiness is unnatural, being opposed to the proper nature of things. This statement (it is clear) is equivalent to a declaration of the general degeneracy and corruption of mankind, because it admits, that men are prone to vices, and subject to calamities, which are at variance with the original dictates, and opposed to the proper condition of their nature: and the practical question is opened by it, how this contrariety is to be corrected. On

this question, which, if stated in christian terms, would be the all-important question of human sanctification, great diversities of opinion obtained, and, as might naturally be expected, very inadequate conceptions of the momentous subject itself prevailed.

And yet all these varieties, as they must be allowed to be, when examined in detail, may be reduced, when traced up to their principles, under two heads : for the stoics find a cure for all evil in the native energy of the human mind, which, if matured in virtue, is able to despise suffering, and thus reach the perfection, to which it aspires, while the academics and peripatetics look for that remedy chiefly to the discipline of education, and the restraints of law. Plato and Aristotle accordingly have drawn the picture of a community, founded upon their respective principles, with a view to train up youth to a conformity with their theoretical notions of rectitude; in the course of which disquisitions Plato has introduced some particulars, which are not only visionary, but unnatural, and subversive of all true morality, while Aristotle with a more severe love of truth, and less exuberance of fancy, lays down a social code,

which is far more correct, and conformed to the fundamental laws of society.

Such then are the theories of the porch, and of the academy, the one seeking to elevate the character of individuals by its own strength, the other to improve that of the whole community through the influence of a well ordered government. Both no doubt had a foundation in truth : for in order to correct what is wrong in human nature there must be power applied from without, and energy exerted from within. It is therefore more surprising, that heathen philosophers should have so far travelled in the right path, than that, being still in the dark on many points, they should have eventually missed their way.

The stoics in applying their principle of an innate energy evidently overrated its power. They spoke of it, as still entire, and were not aware, that it had been impaired by sin, and shorn of its strength and beauty : and hence they held in opposition to universal experience, that a virtuous man is perfectly independent of all external circumstances. The excess, to which they carried this speculative principle, deprived it of all moral efficacy, except in the case of some

chiefs of the sect, whose inflexible obduracy stoutly resisted the dictates of nature, and maintained, if not a stern insensibility to pain, at least a resolute defiance of it, and a fixed determination not to allow, that it is an evil. It was their maxim and their resolution to demonstrate, if possible, that the soul, being armed with virtue, is proof against all disasters, and able to sustain itself in peace and happiness alike in the sunshine of prosperity, and amidst the troubled storms of distress and suffering. There was in this theory a fundamental error : for it denied the disease of nature, and consequently could not cure it. But there was also a necessary truth, that human perfection must be wrought within the soul, though in its present state it cannot be found there. Hence arose many of the extravagances in their ordinary statements, as, that a good man combines in himself every perfection, and that he alone, though in a humble station, is a king, and competent to the right performance of every office in life from the highest to the lowest. But their fundamental principle was, that human perfection consists in living according to nature, or in other words, that the natural constitution of

man is such, that, if he do not suffer himself to be drawn aside by present impressions in opposition to eternal truths, but live according to those rules, which are in the nature of things conducive to his true dignity and highest happiness, he will prefer the soul to the body, permanent interests to temporary gratifications, and the good of the species to the satisfaction of an individual : and this is true, if by the natural constitution of man be meant his original constitution, as God created him, but not, if those propensities, which are now natural to him, be taken into the account ; for to assert not only the superiority of the mind to the body, but its perfect independence of it for comfort and happiness as well as excellence, at a time, when both mind and body are impaired in all their functions by a fatal disease, is rather to maintain a perpetual and hopeless struggle against nature, than to live according to it. It is an endeavour to produce a perfect work with broken tools, instead of seeking in the first instance to repair them."

The academics and peripatetics seem to have been more sensible of the damaged and imperfect condition of the faculties and inclinations of the

human soul. There is a memorable passage, in which Aristotle describes the condition of those, who have not yet attained the mastery over themselves. 'There appears in them' (says he) 'another quality, distinct from reason, which 'struggles and contends against reason: for as, 'when a paralytic patient attempts to turn his 'body in one direction, the palsied limbs are un-'intentionally carried to the opposite, so it is in 'the soul also; for the efforts of persons, who 'have no self-command, are in contrary direc-'tions. In the body however' (he adds) 'we see 'the distortion, but do not see it in the soul: 'and yet perhaps we ought no less to admit, that 'in the soul also there is some quality, distinct 'from reason, which opposes and resists it.' The moral distemper being thus perceived, as necessarily affecting in a greater or less degree all persons, who have not yet attained that complete self-control, which is essential to a perfect character, the question arose, how it is to be corrected: and the short answer, given by both these sects of philosophers, is—'By discipline 'and education.' Plato forms his ideal republic in part upon the principle of excluding all, that he

thought evil, from the instruction of youth, and placing them from their earliest years under such an influence as in his view of it would be favorable to the production of virtue. Aristotle, maintaining the formation of virtuous characters to be essential to the healthiness and prosperity of a state, analyses all the virtues of mind and body, and proposes the enactment of laws, which should prescribe every citizen's duty, and prepare him to do what is right, and abstain from what is wrong, that so a habit may be formed, disposing him to every thing, that is excellent in nature. In enforcing this argument he introduces a maxim of high importance towards rectifying the depraved inclinations of humanity, namely, that all our efforts should be directed to the object of enabling men to feel pleasure and pain on the right occasions : and he concludes his investigation by pointing to a still higher object of pursuit ; for he considers all the moral virtues, as qualities, that are necessary to satisfy the demands of our spiritual nature, much as air and food and exercise are essential to the health of the body, but urges, that, when all these have been acquired, they only fit the mind for a hap-

piness, which without them would be unattainable, and that we should then strive to give a new elevation to our nature, to immortalize it, as it were, to live according to the better part of it, and to resemble the Deity himself, as he conceives it, in the pure enjoyment of an unclouded intellect.

Other philosophers set up different principles of right and wrong. Particularly Epicurus taught, that nature points to enjoyment, as the height of perfection, and that consequently whatever tends most to the pleasure of man, sensual, moral, and intellectual, must on the whole be the fittest, the wisest, and the best for him. By this theory he very consistently excluded the worship and obedience of a supreme lawgiver from his system of morals.

But Cicero had the advantage of examining all these lucubrations of successive philosophers, and exercising an independent judgment upon them. He seems to have been perplexed by their variety, but has nevertheless drawn out with their help a code of morals, which in many respects exhibits an unbending rule of social duty, which may even be an instructive pattern

for christians: for, laying it down, as a maxim, that no conduct which is dishonorable, can ever be expedient, because every one has a deeper interest in the preservation of that bond, which holds society together, than he has in any private gratification, which may be obtained by the disruption of it, he deduces from it lessons of self-denial and self-devotion for the general good, which are certainly above the level, not indeed of gospel-morality, but of the professed morality of many, who call themselves christians.

Still however it remains a melancholy truth, that the world by wisdom, even the boasted wisdom of Greece and Rome, knew not God: and this one defect vitiated all their ethics, and hindered them from discerning what is the true basis of human virtue, the main object to be pursued in all attempts to correct the obliquity of our fallen nature. They never reached that great, cardinal truth of all human morality, that we are the creatures of God, and therefore bound to love him with all our strength, and for his sake to love all, who partake with us in

the common nature. Hence their scheme of duty neither looked up directly to God, nor round to the whole family of man: nor lastly, except in some occasional sentiment, which breathes a moral grandeur above the tone of their practical system, did it stretch its view beyond the present scene; for even transmigration itself does not carry us out of the limits of

this visible diurnal sphere.

It was consequently not only defective, but unsound in principle, and could not, however correctly observed, sanctify, or restore the degenerate character of man.

The eastern world has given birth to other and wilder speculations upon the origin of evil, and the foundation of human morals, attributing all the evil, that exists in the world, to an original principle of evil, as well as all good to an original principle of goodness. These two sources of opposite influence were traced up ultimately to Mind and Matter: whence the doctrine easily resulted, that the sum of human virtue consists in giving to mind a proper as-

cendancy over matter. This theory led in its further progress to the Brahminical notion, that the mind of man is a part of the deity, into which it is again absorbed after death, and to all those absurd inventions of self-torture, still practised by fakeers and others, as if by inflicting pain upon the body, suspending its functions, and depriving it as much as possible of all activity and usefulness, they aided the great object of resisting matter, and advancing mind. This idea, amidst every diversity of idolatry, and the idlest fables of incarnations, and other exploits of their gods, the corrupt relics of original revelation, is found to pervade and animate more or less every known form of oriental philosophy. Even the Persian magians, who worshipped the sun, as the purest emblem of Deity, yet regarded Light and Darkness, as two independent powers, contending for empire, and thus lost that sense of entire dependence upon one uncreated, original, all-sustaining governor, which is the foundation of all true morality. Thus, look where you will, among the Hindoos, or Buddhists, or other idolaters of the east! You will find some trace either of that sentiment,

repeatedly mentioned by Herodotus, that the Deity is envious of human happiness, and that consequently he must be appeased by surrendering some portion of that happiness, to save the remainder, or else, that voluntary sufferings and self-inflicted tortures have a direct tendency by their resistance to matter to purify the spirit, and fit it for its highest enjoyment.

The immense nations of China and Tartary indeed stand by themselves in this survey of the world. That they are gross idolaters, is well known. But of the means, on which they rely for repairing the evils, to which humanity is prone, we know but little, and have reason to believe, that they are themselves for the most part rather indifferent to all questions, connected with a future state, than bigoted to any particular form of superstition.

There is still another large body in the east, who have been formed on the ruins of christianity, and who therefore admit many important truths, though they add to them a vile imposture. Mahomet borrowed from the christian scriptures the duty of faith, but proposed himself, as the object of it, teaching his followers, that Moses

and Jesus were indeed prophets, but that he was a greater than either. He denounced idolatry, and maintained the unity of the Godhead, but added to it the foul falsehood, that Mahomet is his prophet. With respect to morality, he introduced a new duty, that of fighting for the faith against all idolaters and unbelievers, which would outweigh every other virtue, and even compensate for many faults: and he accordingly promised to those, who should die in the prosecution of it, the highest rewards in his sensual Paradise. But we need not pursue the details of this notorious imposture further than to observe, that it generates in all its adherents a contempt or hatred for all, who reject it, and a proud confidence in their own acceptance with the Deity on the mere ground of their being the family, for which Mahomet will make intercession, and conforming to the arbitrary rules of his koran.

But how melancholy is it in looking round on that vast portion of the human race, which has now passed under our review, to find a total absence of that fundamental truth, that the recovery of man to the original perfection of his

nature must be sought in his return to that gracious and righteous governor, who alone could prescribe rules to the creatures, whom he had made, and in conformity to whose holy will must consist their true excellence, and real dignity, and perfection! The sentiment, just quoted from Aristotle, indicates an indistinct perception of this sublime truth. But its practical influence is destroyed by his mistaken notions of the character of God, whom he describes, as rather a contemplative and intellectual being, who sees and knows all things, and interferes with none, than as a moral governor, and a righteous judge. Most truly is it said, that the world by wisdom knew not God. The utmost stretch of human wisdom, when once the light of revelation was withdrawn, was insufficient to discover the true nature, character, and laws of that supreme creator, preserver, and governor, from whose will all things derive their existence, on whose will they depend for continuance in being, and by whose will they ought to be regulated in all circumstances of their history. It is melancholy to observe transcendant intellects, thus darkling in their search of truth, and unable to discern

the way, which the oracles of God have distinctly revealed to us, insomuch, that to those, who are initiated in the doctrine of the bible, it is justly declared, that the words of his mouth are plain to him, that understandeth, as well as right to them, that find knowledge.

And how thankful should we be for the inestimable gift of that book of God, which makes known to us with a clearness, which renders ignorance inexcusable, all, that it most concerns us to know for time, and for eternity! There are truths in the bible, which, though they be so high, that they cannot be reached by the unassisted efforts of the most cultivated mind, are yet brought down there to the level of a child's understanding, so, that now a simple, illiterate mother, who knows only, and values that book of God, may convey to her child notions of wisdom and duty, far more correct, more convincing, and more conducive to happiness and peace than the wisest of ancient philosophers ever attained. The history, the precepts, the parables, the promises, the prophecies, and withal the pervading purity, and moral elevation of the bible form altogether a code of direction to the human

heart, which, when duly received there, can make it wise unto salvation: and, whenever we can trace this influence to its proper effect in the behaviour of a pious, humble, and self-denying christian in circumstances of trial, which throw him upon his principles and his God, we perceive, that it is calculated to form a character, incomparably superior to any, which an unenlightened philosophy can either conceive, or comprehend.

Yet nevertheless numerous errors are still committed even among christians, as they before were among Jews, in the notions, which are commonly entertained, on the nature of sanctification, or on the means of returning to God: and we have therefore in the next lecture to open a new chapter in the progress of our inquiry, and to trace some of the erroneous sentiments, which have at different times prevailed in the church of God itself, and been supported by mistaken interpretations of his word, concerning the way, which is there propounded for our progressive recovery and final salvation.

SERMON VI.

1 SAMUEL XV. 22.

Behold ! To obey is better than sacrifice.

We have now taken a survey of the notions, or sentiments, which have prevailed at different times, and in all the world on two important subjects, the fallen condition of human nature, and the means, by which it is to be restored. We have confined this view indeed hitherto to those states of society, in which there was no actual knowledge of the revelation of God: and we have found, that, wherever the true God was not revealed, he was not known. The world by wisdom knew not God; and, not being truly known, he was of course forgotten. He came not to any real or practical purpose into their thoughts; and, although the divine vengeance was sometimes apprehended, as a punishment for notorious crimes, and his interference in the affairs of the world was admitted in general terms, whence arose the universal practice of

sacrifice, the reverence for oracles, and the varied forms of superstition, still there is this remarkable in all the notions, which were formed among the heathen concerning the nature of human duty, and virtue, and happiness, that they had no respect to any, but the present life, and were not founded on any direct recognition of a divine law. There were indeed, as has been already admitted, fables about Elysium and Tartarus, and the judgment of Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Æacus. But as there was no known code, by which their decisions were supposed to be regulated, so the very general scepticism, which obtained, in regard to the immortality of the soul, and the reality of a future world, deprived them of all possible efficacy in the determination of conduct, except in the case of those flagrant enormities, and universally proscribed vices, in respect to which

Conscience doth make cowards of us all.

In fact the question, often agitated, was not simply, whether the soul of man be immortal, but also, whether it survive the body for a time, whether that be the case with the souls of all men, or

only with those of the great and distinguished, and whether, if it continue to exist, it do not necessarily follow, that its condition must be improved after death, and its capacities enlarged. Xenophon introduces Cyrus, as arguing upon his dying bed, that, because during life the soul is impeded in many of its functions by the imperfections of the body, therefore, when it is separated from the body, it must begin to live in a nobler sense; and Socrates seems also to have entertained a similar expectation. These uncertain speculations, which seem to promise to all mankind, except the notoriously profligate and wicked, that their condition cannot be made worse, and may be greatly ameliorated by death, hindered the anticipation of futurity from having any positive effect upon the regulation of life: and indeed it is very obvious, that, when the question was asked by any heathen philosopher—'What is the chief good, or what the happiness 'of man?'—, the question was asked and answered with reference to the present life exclusively. Hence sprang the inquiry, so often made, and so variously determined, whether any man can be pronounced happy before his death;

and hence arose the dilemma, which appeared always to perplex it, that if it could be answered affirmatively, then a man, who should die miserably and disgracefully, might yet by reason of his foregoing prosperity be esteemed a happy man, or, if it must be decided in the negative, then a man would only then be pronounced happy, when he had ceased to be so, a dilemma, which would vanish at once, if the happiness of man were conceived to have any reference to eternity, and to his condition in a higher state of being. So too the principles of human virtue were founded on a calculation of what is conducive to the welfare of society, to the present interests of the human race, and not to the will of the Deity, to which the creatures of his hand are bound to conform.

The introduction therefore of this single idea throws a new and wonderful light over the whole theory of morals. 'We are not born' (says a heathen moralist) 'for ourselves alone, but for 'our families, and for our country.' The bible adduces a new and higher object of our creation. We are born, to glorify God. It is the first duty of a creature to serve and obey his creator.

Thus the Israelites had a principle in their religion, which alone entitles them to superiority over the rest of the world. Nor was this principle with them a mere barren or speculative notion. They alone possessed a distinct and authentic narrative of the production of all things out of nothing, and of the formation of the world we live in by the one, only, universal creator: and they had a law, delivered to them by immediate revelation from himself, and a history of their own nation from the beginning, which made him known to them by his marvellous interpositions for the establishment of their ancestors in the land, in which they dwelt, and by the overthrow of all their enemies. They had therefore every advantage for knowing the will of the Lord, and the means, which he had devised for human recovery.

Accordingly it is found, that their morality was of a purer stamp than that of the heathens around them; and, wicked as were many of their sovereigns, and corrupt as was the people, they yet retained maxims, and practices, and sentiments, which excelled those of their gentile neighbours. Thus even in the time of that idolatrous

king, Ahab, the servants of the king of Syria said unto him—‘ Behold now! We have heard, ‘ that the kings of the house of Israel are merci- ‘ ful kings,’—; and still later, after the captivity in Babylon, Darius, seeing something in them, which was superior to the rest of his subjects, saw fit to make a decree, that expences be given unto the elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of the house of God, that they might offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of Heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons. Indeed the Jewish scriptures are full of sublime and spiritual truths, which shew, how far the doctrines of revelation surpass the discoveries of reason, and the speculations of philosophy. Where for instance in all the writings of the gentiles shall we find such maxims as these? ‘ If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ‘ ye shall not vex him. But the stranger, that ‘ dwelleth with you, shall be unto you, as one ‘ born among you; and thou shalt love him, as ‘ thyself. If thou seest thine enemy’s ox, or his ‘ ass, going astray, thou shalt surely bring it ‘ back to him again. If thou at all take thy ‘ neighbour’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt de-

'liver it unto him by that the sun goeth down:
'for that is his covering only. It is his raiment
'for his skin. Wherein shall he sleep? and it
'shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me,
'that I will hear; for I am gracious. When
'thou cuttest down thy harvest in the field, and
'hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not
'go again, to fetch it. It shall be for the
'stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow,
'that the Lord, thy God, may bless thee in all
'the work of thy hands. When thou beatest
'thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the
'boughs again. It shall be for the stranger, for
'the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou
'gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt
'not glean it afterward. It shall be for the
'stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.'

But what gives to these maxims in the writings of Israel their peculiar value is the impress of authority, which rests upon them. They are not deductions of reason from calculations of expediency, or disquisitions upon the moral fitness of things, liable to be called in question by other theorists, and superseded by the doctrines of a different school. They are the commands of God. They

are accompanied continually with the solemn declaration—‘ I am the Lord ’—: and they carry with them not only the sanctions of law, but the promises of favour, as in the passages, already quoted, there is on the one hand the denunciation—‘ When thy oppressed neighbour crieth ‘ unto me, I will hear; for I am gracious ’—, and on the other there is the encouraging promise—‘ That the Lord, thy God, may bless thee ‘ in all the work of thy hands.’

With all these advantages then towards forming a right decision, what were the current sentiments among the Jews on this great question of human sanctification?

Not those, which are inculcated in the scriptures, certainly: for we find the prophets generally, and our lord himself, the last of them, complaining, that they knew not the scriptures, neither the power of God. Thus Jeremiah expostulates with them in accordance with numerous other remonstrances throughout the books of the prophets—“ Hath a nation changed “ their gods, which are yet no gods? But my “ people have changed their glory for that,

" which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye " heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid! Be " ye very desolate!"—saith the Lord. " For my " people have committed two evils. They have " forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and " hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that " can hold no water."

It is surely a very surprising fact, considering the precise revelations of the one true God, which were made on many occasions to the people of Israel, and the signal manifestations of divine power, with which they were often accompanied, it is under these circumstances very surprising, that down to the time of the captivity in Babylon that people should have been perpetually given to idolatry. It is almost equally surprising, that after their restoration from Babylon, a restoration, effected in a manner, which, especially when taken in connexion with the prophecies, which announced it, marks a visible interposition of divine providence, there should have grown up among them a sect, like that of the sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead, the existence of angels, and the existence of the separate spirits of departed men, though the

scriptures of the old testament strongly imply them all.

Such however being the treatment, which the scriptures of truth met with from the great body of the Jewish people, we cannot doubt, that their notions upon the question, how a sinner may return to God, must have been very different from that, which is taught in the sacred volume.

Indeed the infidelity and apostasy of the nation was foreseen from the beginning, and occasioned a very remarkable modification in the appointments, which were made for them by God.

The covenant, formed with Abraham, was the charter of the Israelitish people. It was the foundation of their title to the promised land, of their national connexion with the coming saviour, and of their participation in all the privileges and blessings of his redemption.

But, because the people, to whom these promises were made, were not, as Moses reminds them, a righteous, but a stiff-necked people, who would continually, as was foreseen and foretold, provoke the Lord by their transgressions to withdraw his grace from them, therefore, to provide against the consequences to be apprehended

from their perverseness, and to preserve in them, if possible, some remembrance of their hopes and duties, the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the Mosaical law were in due time added afterwards, by which the promises, precepts, and sanctifying character of their holy religion were daily forced, as it were, upon the recollection of all, who observed it. The distinction of meats symbolized to them the difference between holy and profane; the sabbatical years, and the jubilee brought home to them the claims of piety and charity; and the institution of sacrifice with all the ceremonial of public worship led them continually to look forward to one greater and all-sufficient sacrifice, which had been promised, to take away the sin of the world.

But, as was naturally to be expected, the same worldly spirit, which neglected the promises, perverted the law, which was intended to guard them. The service, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them for the purpose of drawing their attention to the spiritual duties, thus outwardly represented, the gifts and sacrifices, which could not possibly be the ultimate

end of their religious worship, because they could not make him, that did the service, perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, were by them substituted for the reality and the power of godliness. They placed their religion in them altogether, and satisfied themselves with outward conformity, when they chose to conform at all, instead of inward holiness.

Against this error their prophets are continually protesting. Thus Isaiah represents the Lord, as rejecting, and even loathing these very institutions of his own appointment, because those, who observed them, rested in them, and instead of using them, as instruments, for their advancement in holiness, made them a cover for iniquity. "To what purpose is the multi-
"tude of your sacrifices unto me?"—saith the
'Lord. "I am full of the burnt offerings of
"rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight
"not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or
"of he-goats. When ye come, to appear
"before me, who hath required this at your
"hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more
"vain oblations! Incense is an abomination
"unto me. The new moons and sabbaths, the

" calling of assemblies I cannot away with. It " is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your " new moons and your appointed feasts my soul " hateth. They are a trouble unto me. I am " weary to bear them: and, when ye spread " forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from " you: Yea. When ye make many prayers, I " will not hear. Your hands are full of blood."

By Jeremiah again the Lord remonstrates with his people in the bitterest terms on this very account, saying—" Behold! Ye trust in lying " words, that cannot profit. Will ye steal, mur- " der, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, " and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after " other gods, whom ye know not, and come, and " stand before me in this house, which is called " by my name, and say—'" We are delivered, to " ' do all these abominations '"? Is this " house, which is called by my name, become a " den of robbers in your eyes? Behold! I have " seen it:"—saith the Lord.'

Moreover it is striking to observe the very same fault, charged upon the Jews in our saviour's time, though all the circumstances of their condition were changed, and although their national

character in some other respects had undergone proportionable variations. ‘ Woe unto you ! ’— says our lord himself to the scribes and pharisees of his day. ‘ Woe unto you, scribes ‘ and pharisees, hypocrites ! For ye pay tithe ‘ of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have ‘ omitted the weightier matters of the law, judg- ‘ ment, mercy, and faith. These ought ye to ‘ have done, and not to leave the other undone, ‘ ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and ‘ swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and ‘ pharisees, hypocrites ! For ye make clean the ‘ outside of the cup, and of the platter. But ‘ within they are full of extortion and excess. ‘ Thou blind pharisee, cleanse first that, which is ‘ within the cup and platter, that the outside of ‘ them may be clean also ! Woe unto you, ‘ scribes and pharisees, hypocrites ! For ye are ‘ like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed ap- ‘ pear beautiful outward, but are within full of ‘ dead men’s bones, and all uncleanness. Even ‘ so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto ‘ men. But within ye are full of hypocrisy and ‘ iniquity.’

But there is no passage of scripture, where the

substitution of outward homage for real conformity is more distinctly exposed, or more sternly rebuked, than it is by the language of Samuel to Saul in the text. ‘ Behold ! ’—said that faithful monitor. ‘ To obey is better than sacrifice.’

In this sentence the opposite principle to that, which characterized the common and prevalent course of Israelitish feeling and practice under every variation in their history, against which successive prophets, and even our lord himself, as with one mouth, protested, but which still continued to mark the conduct of the great mass of the people till that time, when the avenging justice of God took away from them the power of sacrifice, as they had themselves surrendered the still higher privilege of obedience, is strongly put forth, and asserted. ‘ Behold ! ’—says the prophet. ‘ To obey is better than sacrifice.’

The law of sacrifice was a divine institution. It inculcated by a public act, constantly repeated, the necessity of an atonement ; and it directed accordingly the blood of some appointed victim to be shed every day, avowedly for the pardon of sin. Still however it was of use only for that purpose, to obtain forgiveness, not to begin that

new life of holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. It was indeed a preparation for that new life. But all actual and willing obedience is more than a preparation. It is a part of it: and therefore to obey, which is an essentially holy act, is better than sacrifice, which is only a sacramental and propitiatory service: whence it is, that saint Peter even declares without any direct reference to that great sacrifice, which taketh away the sin of the world, that in every nation he, that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. He is doing that, for which that propitiatory offering only prepared the way: and therefore his acceptance is clear; for, whatever efficacy sacrifice may have in procuring the acceptance of a sinner, to obey is better than sacrifice. It is a farther advance in the life of godliness, a nearer conformity to the law of our being.

Let us now then proceed further to consider more particularly, what must have been the exact notions, the settled opinions, which the great body of the Israelitish nation actually entertained, upon the means of returning to God, and recovering from the mischief of the fall!

They were clearly aware, that they were sinners against God. Of this their continual use of sacrifice, whether offered to the true God, or to idols, is an unquestionable evidence: for no one offers a sacrifice, who does not seek remission of his offences, or conceive, that he needs something, to effect his reconciliation with the Deity. But, having joined in the sacrifices of the tabernacle, or temple, the Israelitish worshipper was often content; or, if that could not satisfy his conscience, there were the various rites of purification, ablution, abstinence from unclean food, a vow of nazaritism, and other positive ordinances, on the strength of which, if regularly, or duly observed by him, he felt himself assured of being in the right way, and counted among the true people of God: or again, if still he should be disappointed in his expectations, if, after having looked for temporal blessings in reward of his acts of piety, he should meet with afflictions or distresses, ill health, the loss of friends or children, or any other grievous calamity, while others prospered, and were at ease, (for to these earthly prospects the view of a sadducee must have been limited), he would attribute his misfortune to a

neglect of some ritual appointment, and would thus be tempted to try the practices of others, of his heathen neighbours for instance, much in the same way as ignorant persons even in this day will resort to gipsies, or charmers, to do that for them, which they neglect to seek from the pure and simple rules of the gospel. This was what the multitude of Jews, who had fled into Egypt, said to Jeremiah—'As for the word, that thou 'hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, 'we will not hearken unto thee. But we will 'certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of 'our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen 'of Heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto 'her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our 'kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, 'and in the courts of Jerusalem: for then had 'we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw 'no evil. But, since we left off to burn incense 'to the queen of Heaven, and to pour out drink-'offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, 'and have been consumed by the sword, and by 'the famine.' This again was what Saul did, when he persuaded himself, that he might make compensation for neglecting a divine command

by offering an uncommanded sacrifice, and when afterwards on finding, that the Lord answered him not either by dreams, or by urim, or by prophets, he sought out a woman, that had a familiar spirit.

Even after the vice of idolatry had been completely worn out by the captivity in Babylon, we trace the same propensity in another form, and find the pharisees, and scribes, and doctors of the law, making their escape from its plain and simple rules, to take refuge in human traditions. ‘ For,’ (said our lord himself to them in his distinct and authoritative remonstrance upon this very point), ‘ laying aside the commandment of ‘ God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the wash- ‘ ing of pots and cups ; and many other suchlike ‘ things ye do ’— : and then he added in a strain of sacred irony—‘ Full well ye reject the ‘ commandment of God, that ye may keep ‘ your own tradition.’

And how are we to account for this prevailing disposition to substitute first the ceremonies of the law for its moral precepts, and then the inventions of men for the worship, appointed by God ? The first must arise from that dislike to

the moral precepts of God, which has adhered to our nature ever since the fall, the second from a consciousness, that all the ceremonies of a religion, which comes from God, imply in the worshippers a desire to fulfil his precepts also spiritually as well as formally, whereas idolatry and tradition content themselves with outward service.

Hence arises that instinctive readiness, with which men discover and pursue any easier refuge from the wrath of God than that, with which they are furnished by the word of God. The institution of sacrifice (they are quick enough to perceive) alters most beneficially their condition before God. It points to means of acceptance and reconciliation, of which he, who makes use of them, may avail himself: and, being thus assured, that their condition is changed for the better, they rest satisfied with this improvement, and aspire to nothing beyond it, being willingly ignorant of that ulterior truth, with which however conscience, when honestly consulted, will not suffer them to be entirely unacquainted, that this improvement in their condition is intended to be instrumental to a higher end,

namely the improvement of their character; that the forgiveness of sin is designed, as a step to the conquest of sin; and that after all a holy God cannot be satisfied without holiness in his worshipper. It is the secret consciousness of this truth, accompanied with a real unwillingness to receive it, that disposes men to submit readily to any multiplication of ceremonies, nay, even to severe penances, and acts of considerable self-denial, or still further to the violation of their own natural feelings in giving the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul, if they can thereby flatter themselves, that an indemnity may be obtained by them for continuing in their evil ways. Thus the pharisee in the parable said—' I fast twice in the week. I give tithes ' of all, that I possess.'—: and this he did, and much more than this, abstaining from all those outward vices, the commission of which would degrade him in society, and hoping by these compliances with the outward directions of the law, or the traditions of the elders, to cover those more subtle and cherished offences of the heart, with which our lord distinctly charges him. Still, if these institutions come immediately from

God, none, who receive them, can altogether hide from themselves the holiness of heart and life, to which they are intended to be subservient: and therefore they the more willingly acquiesce in the commandments and doctrines of men, which, if they be only observed in the letter, press upon the conscience no further.

It is thus, that, while the morality of the old testament infinitely excels all the boasted ethics of the most learned of the heathen philosophers, and while those individuals in the commonwealth of Israel, who conformed to its spiritual requisitions, exhibited the living proof of it in their own practice, it often happened, that the moral code, actually embraced by the Jewish nation, even by their best-instructed scribes and doctors in the most straitest sect of their religion, fell short of them. The corruption of the best things is often the worst. The heathen philosopher, when he saw and lamented the viciousness of mankind, set about reforming it by early discipline, or legislation, or instruction, his aim being honestly to make men better than they were, though he knew not how to effect it. But the Jew had learned a more excellent way.

He knew, that there was a provision for sin, and for uncleanness; and he rested in that provision without intending any reformation at all. This is intimated by saint Paul, when he says—'Behold! Thou art called a Jew, and restest in 'the law, and makest thy boast of God.' Resting in the law, and making his boast of God, to whom he had been consecrated by his circumcision, he thought himself safe, and said to others—'Stand by thyself! Come not near 'to me! For I am holier than thou.'—, although in essential holiness of heart and life he had made no advances at all.

The truth, which the Jew thus neglected, is yet written in his own scriptures, as with a sunbeam. 'Behold! Thou requirest truth in the 'inward parts. If I regard iniquity in my heart, 'the Lord will not hear me. The thoughts of 'the wicked are an abomination to the Lord. 'For the Lord seeth not, as man seeth; for 'man looketh on the outward appearance, but 'the Lord looketh on the heart. The Lord 'searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the 'imaginations of the thoughts. The righteous 'God trieth the hearts and reins. Thinkest

'thou, that I will eat bulls' flesh, or drink the 'blood of goats? Wash you! Make you 'clean! I, the Lord, search the heart. I try 'the reins, even to give every man according to 'his ways and according to the fruit of his 'doings. I desired mercy, and not sacrifice, and 'the knowledge of God more than burnt-offer-'ings.' Had they regarded all the institutions in their religious worship, as subservient and instrumental to this end, they would have found in them what they were designed to prove, helps to the knowledge of God, and to the consistent practice of duty; for, as saint Paul reminds them, circumcision verily profited, if they kept the law, whereas otherwise their circumcision was so far from profiting them, that it was made uncircumcision in the sight of God. When therefore they forgot the great cardinal truth, that to obey is better than sacrifice, and presumed to offer to God the very sacrifices, which he had appointed, while yet in other respects they neglected the obedience, which he requires, he says of them—'These are a smoke in my nose, 'a fire, that burneth all the day.'

Thus every thing, which we have yet traced in

our rapid sketch of the sentiments and religious notions of mankind, tends to confirm us in the melancholy truth, that the heart of man is naturally alienated from the mind of God. It dislikes the strictness of the divine law, and shrinks from its purity.

It is only in the bible itself, that faithful mirror of the will of God, that we can discover the true way for a sinner to be recovered, and restored. Having therefore examined the opinions upon that subject, which were commonly entertained by those, to whom those lively oracles, or rather the first part of them, were originally committed, our next inquiry will be, what opinions have been commonly entertained upon this question among christians.

May the holy spirit help us in the prosecution of this inquiry, that we may honestly seek, and clearly discern, and faithfully pursue the only way of peace and safety !

SERMON VII.

JOHN III. 19.

This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

OUR inquiries have been limited hitherto to the notions, entertained on the subject of sanctification, by heathens, or by Jews. We must now proceed to investigate a question of greater nicety, namely the sentiments, which have prevailed upon this all-important topic since the revelation of christianity, and the completion of the canon of scripture. This indeed ought to have put an end to all perplexity, and to all difference of judgment upon a matter, which is the very scope and end of the gospel, and on which its instructions accordingly are designed to be most explicit.

But unhappily there is nothing, in which the depravation of our nature through the fall is more manifest, than in its slowness to admit

truths, the admission of which implies an acknowledgment of error, and the consequent duty of reformation. This is the secret cause, which amidst many modifications, and under various disguises has hindered the true scriptural method of sanctification from being apprehended or received in every age, and which also indisposes men, though unconscious of that indisposition, to search diligently the sacred volume, which reveals it.

It has been already observed, that, when it pleased God for the purpose of preserving his chosen people in the true religion to give them a system of types, ceremonies, and external ordinances, calculated to keep him and his appointments constantly in their mind, they perversely rested in these means, as their end, and substituted the outward ordinances of their religion for that religion itself, to which it was intended to be subservient. The same disposition still haunts the church, and will ever haunt it, so long as any reluctance to the true and spiritual service, which christianity demands, remains, unsubdued.

The first indication of this leaven appeared in the very life-time of the apostles themselves:

and they notice it thus. ‘ We have heard, that ‘ certain, which went out from us, have troubled ‘ you with words, subverting your souls, saying ‘ ye must be circumcised, and keep the law, to ‘ whom we gave no such commandment.’ Some Jewish converts (it seems) were so attached to the law of Moses, that they would fain have perpetuated its shadows, after they had been superseded by the substance: and so indignant is saint Paul at this attempt to obscure the free promises of the gospel by the dark and distant resemblances of the law, that he says to the Galatian converts—‘ I marvel, that ye are so ‘ soon removed from him, that called you into ‘ the grace of Christ, unto another gospel, which ‘ is not another,’ or, which other gospel has no real existence. ‘ But there be some, that trouble ‘ you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. ‘ But, though we, or an angel from Heaven ‘ preach any other gospel unto you than that, ‘ which we have preached unto you, let him be ‘ accursed! ’—: and again to the Colossians he writes—‘ If ye be dead with Christ from the ‘ rudiments of the world, why, as though living ‘ in the world, are ye subject to ordinances—

"Touch not! Taste not! Handle not!"—, 'which all are to perish with the using, after the 'commandments and doctrines of men?'—: and therefore he adds—'Let no man judge you in 'meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holiday, or 'of the new moon, or of the sabbath-days, 'which are a shadow of things to come! But 'the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile 'you of your reward in a voluntary humility, 'and worshipping of angels, intruding into those 'things, which he hath not seen, vainly puffed 'up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the 'head!' He enumerates many particulars, some borrowed from the Mosaical law, others the inventions of men, professing the gospel of Christ; and he proscribes them all, as unfit to be rested in, or trusted to by those, to whom the blessed message of salvation has been proclaimed in all its fulness and purity.

The earnestness, with which the apostles denounce this error, the strong language, with which they guard their readers against any perversion of the simplicity of the gospel, implies what on some occasions they distinctly declare, that even in that early age, before the first love

of christians had begun to cool, and while the presence of the apostles kept it in perpetual exercise, there was a principle at work, which would corrupt the doctrine of Christ. That principle is sometimes called the mystery of iniquity, which (saint Paul tells us) even in his days was already working in the bosom of christians. At other times it is called the spirit of Antichrist, of which saint John declares, that even then already it was in the world. Whether it assume the shape of magnifying the form of godliness, that it may the more artfully deny its power, or whether it take the course of undermining some of the leading truths of the gospel, that it may deprive them of their force and influence, it has but one origin, that men, though convinced of the truth of christianity, unable to resist its evidence, and in some measure sensible of its beauty and suitableness to the wants of our fallen nature, yet received not the love of it, that they might be saved. In our saviour's own language in the text men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds, the deeds, to which their hearts inclined, even when they were withheld by the checks of conscience, or by the

fear of consequences from practising them, were evil.

If this was the subtle principle at work even in the life-time of the apostles, while the church wore its first gloss, and every thing, which would soil its purity, might seem to be kept away both by their salutary presence, and by the watchfulness, authority, and persecuting spirit of its numerous enemies, Jewish, philosophical, and pagan, we shall of course expect to see it more developed, as we advance down the stream of time, and find the power, which then repressed its manifestation, taken out of the way : nor shall we be mistaken. Amidst all the diversities of sects and sentiments, which have sprung up at different eras in the church, the master principle of delusion has ever been a disposition to attach disproportionate importance to the exterior, the ceremonial of religion, and thus to draw attention away from that, which is its real design and tendency, namely to substitute the love of the Father for the love of the world. The great object of Satan, when he could not extinguish the light of truth, was to throw a mist around it, to dim its lustre, and deprive its beams of some portion of their healing efficacy.

But even in the days of primitive truth and order there were not wanting some precocious specimens of the full development of this perversion. Thus Hymenæus, Alexander, and Philetus began by putting away a good conscience ; and then, that they might quiet the uneasiness of that internal monitor, they first made shipwreck concerning their own faith, and afterwards overthrew the faith of others, saying, that the resurrection is past already, and thus taking away from the pursuit of holiness all that support, which is derived from the hope of the future. Again, saint Peter speaks of some persons, who feasted with the christians, and yet sported themselves with their own deceivings ; the reason of which was, that they had a heart, exercised with covetous practices, through which, while they spoke great swelling words of vanity (that is probably, while they dazzled the brethren by the charms of a specious eloquence), they allured through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness those, that were clean escaped from them, who live in error. Afterwards in saint John's later days the Nicolaitans seem to have been a sect of immoral professors of christianity.

Immorality prepared the way for error in doctrine. Hence men gladly seized hold of the gnostic fables, and listened to those many deceivers, who, while they called themselves christians, yet confessed not, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, or in other ways denied the Lord, that bought them : and, when saint John opposed their delusions, so bold had they become in error, that Diotrephes refused to receive the brethren, whom saint John himself sent, to reprove him, and even presumed so far as to cast them out of the church.

The pertinacity, with which these errors were retained, even when the true light was shining in all its orient brightness, could arise from no other cause, but this, however it may be disguised or palliated, that men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

But still in all these Protean varieties of delusion one principle is always discernible, namely the disposition, natural to the fallen heart of man, to deprive the gospel of its truly spiritual character by setting up some phantom, which may be followed without the extent of sacrifice, which christianity requires.

We may trace this tendency in several particulars.

First our lord prayed for his disciples, that they all might be one ; which saint Paul interprets, as the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, and therefore urges the disciples to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. But in how many instances has this unity been inculcated, as if it consisted merely in an external confederacy under one earthly head, so, that, if men would only profess themselves members of that one church, and submit to its discipline and decisions, no inquiry would be made, whether there was any real unity of the spirit among them, or any actual possession of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God !

So too our blessed lord declares—' Except a ' man be born of water, and of the spirit, he can- ' not enter into the kingdom of God.' But how often have we known the mere act of baptism relied upon, as a sufficient test of discipleship, without due regard to that work of the holy spirit, which alone constitutes a true christian, and the church itself, of which he is a member, a habitation of God !

Again, when our blessed lord affirmed with a solemn asseveration—‘ Except ye eat the flesh of ‘ the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have ‘ no life in you’—, when he added—‘ Whoso ‘ eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath ‘ eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last ‘ day ; for my flesh is meat indeed, and my ‘ blood is drink indeed. He, that eateth my ‘ flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, ‘ and I in him ’—, and again—‘ He, that eateth ‘ of this bread, shall live for ever ’—, and when on his disciples’ murmuring at this saying he subjoined in explanation—‘ It is the spirit, that ‘ quickeneth. The flesh profiteth nothing ’—, have we not known these gracious promises tied down to the literal and carnal expression of them, as if a formal celebration of the Lord’s supper could profit those, who by their life and conversation are shewn to be destitute of the life-giving spirit ?

Once more it is plain, that the apostles constituted bishops over some of their churches, giving it in charge to them to commit the things, that they had heard of them, to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also, but to

stop the mouths of such as were unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, whereby they laid the foundation of that true apostolical church, which by the good providence of God has continued ever since. But how often do we find the mere succession from the apostles insisted on, as the single and sufficient evidence of an evangelical ministry, without reference to those spiritual qualifications, which the apostles conjoin with it, that they be faithful men, who may be able to teach others what was originally received from the eyewitnesses and ministers of the word !

It is remarkable also, that the apostles of our lord speak often of the simplicity, which characterized their teaching ; that in witnessing both to small and great they said none other things than those, which the prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first, that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the gentiles ; that hence they determined to know nothing among their hearers, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and almost in a manner confined their testimony both to the Jews, and

also to the Greeks, to those two main articles, repentance toward God, and faith toward our lord, Jesus Christ. On the other hand they caution their disciples against every thing, from whatever quarter, which might have a tendency to keep these fundamental truths out of view by occupying their minds with matters of secondary moment. ‘ Beware,’ (says saint Paul) ‘ lest any ‘ man spoil you through philosophy and vain ‘ deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudi- ‘ ments of the world, and not after Christ ! ‘ Give no heed to fables, which minister questions ‘ rather than godly edifying, which is in faith ! ‘ Turn not aside unto vain jangling ! Refuse ‘ profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise ‘ thyself rather unto godliness ! Shun profane ‘ and vain babblings ! For they will increase ‘ unto more ungodliness. Avoid foolish and un- ‘ learned questions, knowing, that they do gender ‘ strifes ! ’ Thus philosophy on the one hand, and unlearned questions on the other, the traditions of men, and fables, which minister questions, are alike to be guarded against, if they withdraw the mind from that godly edifying, which is in faith.

These repeated warnings indicate a deep-rooted propensity to the faults, against which they are directed: and the originating cause of that propensity is the spiritual character of the true religion, which cannot but be distasteful to the corrupt inclinations of nature.

Hence men under the christian dispensation have resorted even to the blind expedients of heathenism rather than follow the pure guidance of a holier principle. The very idolatry of the heathens has been imported into the christian church, only substituting the virgin and the saints for the heroes and demigods of antiquity. Although the one true sacrifice, in which all other sacrifices were merged, because they were only emblematical and prophetic of the true, has been once offered upon the cross, another sacrifice has been instituted, and the ancient, superseded institution revived, called the sacrifice of the mass: and the Platonic doctrine of purgatory, and the Brahminical system of penance have been introduced into the church, that so there might still be some power on Earth to forgive sins without the necessity of going for it to that throne, which no riches can bribe, nor any hypocrisy elude: nor

have men been unwilling to elevate the christian priesthood into a character, with which the scriptures have not invested it, and even to give those, who are entrusted with it, dominion over the faith of their brethren, because it was hoped, that a human intercessor would be more indulgent to human frailties than one, who is altogether divine. Hence arose the belief in papal indulgences, and the persuasion, implied in that belief, that the gift of God may be purchased with money, and hence all that tissue of fraud and delusion, which makes the intention of the priest of more value in the administration of a sacrament than the faith of the communicant, there being always a ready disposition to make religion the business of a profession, and consign it to a particular order of men, rather than to regard it, as the personal work of each individual, and thus to transfer to others those duties, which none can discharge, but ourselves, because, as the scriptures instruct us, every man shall bear his own burden, and every man must give account for himself before God.

These exaggerated notions of the sanctity, adhering to a particular profession, or to par-

ticular places, and times, and forms, has led other persons by a natural recoil to explode all forms, and even to dissipate the substance of religion by diluting it into a mere moral system without an atonement, without a divine saviour, without a sanctifying spirit, although the consciousness of sin, which cannot be extinguished, naturally disposes them to look for a mediator, and cannot be pacified without a well-grounded assurance of pardon.

In fact in the bosom of a conscious sinner there is an instinctive dread of approaching God. Thus the people of Israel said unto Moses—'Speak thou with us! and we will hear. But 'let not God speak with us, lest we die! For 'this great fire will consume us. If we hear 'the voice of the Lord, our God, any more, then 'we shall die.'—: and Gideon, when he perceived, that an angel of the Lord had spoken to him, exclaimed—'Alas, O Lord, God, for be-'cause I have seen an angel of the Lord face to 'face!' The same sentiment drove Peter, when the miracle of the fishes made him sensible, in what presence he was standing, to say unto Jesus—'Depart from me! For I am a sinful

‘ man, O Lord ’—: and so also the swineherds of Gergesa, aware, that they were maintaining unclean animals for a purpose, forbidden by the law of Moses, when they saw those animals driven into the sea through an exertion of the power of Jesus, besought him, that he would depart out of their coasts.

It was indeed partly to meet this natural feeling, that our lord himself graciously became man, and interposed himself, a human being, a partaker of all our wants and weaknesses, a sharer in all the sufferings of our nature, and of all the evils, which attach to it, except only its sin, between us and a holy God, that so we might become convinced, that in him we have one, who can be touched with a sense of our infirmities, and intercede with effect for creatures, whose griefs he has borne, and whose sorrows he has carried. But yet this intercessor (it seems), notwithstanding all this graciousness, is still too awful, too holy for unrenewed human nature ; and it therefore seeks for intercessors, who can sympathize not only with its sorrows, but with its sins. When our lord was upon Earth, he had occasion to complain—‘ Ye will not come to

‘ me that ye might have life.’—: and the same complaint he has still too often occasion to repeat now, that he is exalted to the right hand of the Father. The entire absence of all sinfulness, of all allowance for unrepented iniquity, and of all compromise with any, the least disposition to retain it, which, whether he be on Earth, or in Heaven, is an essential element in his character, must needs indispose all, who have not fully made up their minds to abandon it, to regard, as their friend and their counsellor, one, who, though he has indeed died upon the cross, to save us, yet did not come, to save us in our sins, but from them. It is this absolute necessity to renounce all sin, and to take the holy law and pure example of the blessed Jesus for our guide in every part of life, which renders us ready to catch at any other method of salvation than that, which has been so wonderfully provided for us by the Lord, our redeemer: for this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ‘ Behold,’—says the Lord to all, who prefer their own dark inventions to the bright and clear discoveries of his

perfect gospel—‘ all ye, that kindle a fire, that ‘ compass yourselves about with sparks! Walk ‘ in the light of your fire, and in the sparks, that ‘ ye have kindled! This shall ye have of my ‘ hand. Ye shall lie down in sorrow.’

Hence it arose, as I have already intimated, that even in the primitive and apostolical church itself many indications were afforded of this lingering attachment to the rudiments of the world. What saint Paul calls will-worship, is an inclination to worship God after the dictate of our own wills instead of submitting our wills to the appointments of his righteousness. Thus many even then placed a great part of their religion in the observance of particular days, or in abstinence from food at particular seasons, and became again subject to obsolete and discarded ordinances; and afterwards in the age, which almost immediately succeeded that of the apostles, while men were very precise in the maintenance of fasts, while they were zealously intent on fixing the right time for the festival of Easter, and attached a peculiar sanctity to a life of celibacy and monastic institutions, they were not equally exact in certain rules of

morality, which appear indeed not to have yet become quite purged from heathen laxity and error. For instance we find frauds and falsehoods, if committed for pious ends, or holy purposes, to be not only tolerated, but defended by many of the early fathers; and in their mode of contending for christianity we too often find credit taken for pretended miracles, and currency given to some of those legends, connected with the relics of martyrs, which have since defaced the character of the church, while the prayers of those, who had faced the danger of martyrdom, or devoted themselves to the seclusion of a hermitage, were thought of more efficacy than personal faith and repentance. The superstitious merit also, which was attached to the act of baptism, led many, who professed and called themselves christians, to defer it till the end of life, that so it might cover more delinquencies, when administered, and in the mean time allow them to continue in the indulgence of sinful habits, unmortified tempers, or immoral practices, which they were not at present prepared to abandon.

These were some of the early perversions of

christian truth. The same tendency may be found at the root of most of the erroneous tenets, which have obtained currency in every subsequent age.

Men, who renounce the righteousness, revealed in the gospel, invent a righteousness of their own, consisting in religious austerities and meritorious mortifications, to satisfy the cravings of a heart, conscious of sin, and averse to holiness; and, when it is found, that there are still persons, who cannot be contented with such exterior righteousness, and whose more entire devotedness to the will of God shames the less spiritual religion, to which the world is willing to conform, the secret dislike of the heart to the work of real godliness has often been stimulated so far as to enact laws, and awaken the flames of persecution against such as worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and, having no confidence in the flesh, are taught to wait through the spirit for the hope of righteousness by faith.

But what is the prevailing notion of christianity among the great mass of believers even at the present day? I do not mean among papists, or heretics, or persons, who are misled by some

particular theory. I do not mean among socinians, or others, who deny the fundamental verities of the gospel. But in this favored, this protestant country, and among the ordinary members of our own church, what is the idea, most commonly entertained, of the means, by which the soul may be recovered to God, and attain everlasting salvation ?

We see multitudes, who pass through life without thinking it necessary to make the words of Christ the law of their actions. They have been baptized in infancy ; and they attach a certain degree of holiness to that. They fancy without much earnest inquiry, that it places them in a safe state ; and, unless they forfeit the advantage of it by some notorious immorality, they persuade themselves, that they are sure of the mercy of Christ, when they die. They know indeed, that they have fallen short of many of their acknowledged duties, and perhaps have been betrayed into some actions, which they cannot pretend to justify : and the recollection of this together with a vague notion, that a participation of the Lord's supper demands a degree of purity and devotion, to which they have not attained,

and do not aspire, hinders them from coming frequently, or constantly, or perhaps from coming at all to that hallowed rite : and yet, while they thus count themselves unworthy of this common privilege of christians, they flatter themselves, that, should they die in that state, they shall not be shut out from the kingdom of Heaven. Nevertheless they are not quite ready to put their souls upon that venture. They look forward to a time, when they shall think more of these things than suits with their present inclination or leisure ; or at all events they hope, that God will be so indulgent to them as not to cut them off suddenly, before they have had time to send for a minister, and to receive from his hands the tokens of the dying love of their master. In the mean time it seems little to them to neglect the sabbath occasionally, to live without much secret or earnest prayer, to waste time in idleness and dissipation, to devote all their days to the accumulation of a fortune, or the attainment of some earthly good ; and they do not reflect, or at least they do not remember, that the religion, which they profess, pledges them to a course of conduct, essentially different from that of decorous

heathens, and furnishes them with helps, of which they are required to make diligent use, for the acquisition of that real and vital holiness, without which no man can see the Lord.

In short they regard christianity, as a provision for obtaining the pardon of iniquity, rather than as the power of God, enabling them to surmount it, as a dispensation from the penalties of transgression, rather than as a system of grace, by which the tendency to transgress may be resisted and overcome, as a mitigated law, rather than as a remedy for sin. Many even among those, who have made great attainments in science, in learning, in eloquence, in political skill and sagacity, are contented with the estimation, in which they are justly held by their fellow-mortals, and forget to concern themselves anxiously or seriously about the way of peace and salvation. They conform to all the outward services of religion, to all the decorous proprieties of life; they have perhaps been instructed early in the general scheme and subject of the bible, in which they imagine, that they have little more to learn; they think, that in cultivating the talents they possess

they are discharging the duty, which God has assigned to them ; and it never seems to enter their minds, that their souls are naturally in a state of danger, that they are now spared by the mercy of God, in order that they may seek and use the means for delivering them out of that danger, and in short, that they have sins to subdue, and graces to cultivate, before they can be fit for a state of society, in which all, who are admitted into it, love God with a perfect love, hate sin with a perfect hatred, and are restored to that image and likeness of God, which they cannot flatter themselves, that they at present possess.

If this is the state of things even amidst the clear light of the gospel, so freely and widely diffused, as it is in this country, can we wonder, if still grosser perversions of christian truth should be admitted, where, as in the Romish church, the bible is a sealed book to the laity ? It is the accredited doctrine of that church, that man may merit grace, that he may perform acts of virtue above the law of God, that the earthly governors of the church have power to wield the prerogative of Heaven in the pardon of trans-

gression, that justification is not a boon, granted to a penitent sinner, but a benefit, to be earned by intrinsic holiness of life, or instead of that by conformity to the rules of the church, and various other positions, subversive of the gracious scheme of the gospel. Nor must it be omitted, that some even among ourselves have countenanced several of these errors by denying the doctrine of justification by faith, and thus confounding the act of justification and the work of sanctification together, whereby the free grace of Christ in the absolute forgiveness of sin and reconciliation of the offender is disparaged and annulled.

Thus it is, that men are continually striving by one expedient or another to elude the necessity of spiritual sanctification. If once they can be brought to believe, that they are justified by the mercy of God, they too often shew little desire to be sanctified by his spirit. If on the other hand they are taught, that justification cannot be perfectly attained, while any sinfulness remains in the heart, they are led to put a lower construction upon the nature of sanctification than the bible inculcates and requires. In either

case the plain word of God, which warns them, that they must be sanctified, and that wholly, in body, soul, and spirit, if ever they would enter Heaven, is evaded; and fresh and melancholy evidence is continually accumulating in proof of the statement in the text, which alone explains the mystery, that light is come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds, however specious in their own eyes, however honorable in the estimation of others, in the sight of God and the testimony of enlightened conscience were evil.

We have now only remaining to consider carefully the nature and process of sanctification, as it is revealed in scripture: and may almighty God, who made his blessed son to be circumcised and obedient to the law for man, grant us the true circumcision of the spirit, that, our hearts and all our members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey his blessed will through the same his son, Jesus Christ, our lord! Amen!

SERMON VIII.

JUDE 20, 21.

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord, Jesus Christ, unto eternal life!

We have now surveyed at some length the original rectitude of human nature, the first defection from that rectitude, which constituted the fall, and the extensive mischiefs, which have followed, not only in the punishment, which it entailed, but also in that depravation of all our faculties, dispositions, and habits, which one foul and fatal offence occasioned. We have also observed, that the extent of that depravation is such, that all men are in some measure sensible of it. They are seen to complain, as with one voice, of the general wickedness of mankind, and to acknowledge the need of some remedy. Accordingly various remedies have been suggested;

and the course of our investigation has led us to trace some of the expedients, which heathen philosophers have devised for correcting the obliquity of our nature, and recovering it to a better state. We have further inquired into the notions, which have been commonly entertained, concerning the means of that recovery, among Jews and christians, and have thus discovered another proof of our degeneracy in the readiness of men to put up with any expedient for that purpose, rather than resort to the only true one, which requires the entire surrender of the soul to a superior guidance, that it may be brought back into the way of peace and holiness. Light is come into the world, even the light of truth, a light from Heaven. But yet men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.

It remains only, that we should honestly and fearlessly come to the light, which has been shed upon our path in the book of revelation. We have seen, that in all the varied circumstances of human society, alike in patriarchal, Israelitish, and christian ages, there has been a propensity to rest in the form to the neglect of the sub-

stance of religion. This propensity indeed was in some degree excusable under those dispensations, which taught by emblem, and instructed by outward ceremony, whereas now to recur to them is to retrograde from light to darkness, from truth to shadow. Let us therefore look to the bible itself, that we may there discern, what is the plan, devised by almighty wisdom, for bringing back a sinner to God, and training him gradually up to that perfection, from which he is fallen, and to which he is invited to return !

That plan consists of two parts: and it is in disjoining those parts, that all the errors of christians on this vital question essentially originate, and by which they are sustained.

Those two parts are first reconciliation, secondly sanctification. When these two works are fully accomplished, and have produced their true effect, then, but not before, is attained the great end of all, which is perfect salvation.

The reconciliation to God, which is the first and greatest need of a sinner, was once for all effected by our blessed redeemer upon the cross. It was effected, but not applied. Thus saint Paul tells us, that by the righteousness of one

the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, that it was his gracious design through the blood of his cross to reconcile all things unto himself, and that consequently Christ by his own blood has entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. His Work is therefore perfect. It has reached its completion, and is never to be repeated.

This work however, though perfect in itself, requires to be applied in order to be effectual for its object. A further operation therefore is still necessary, to render the finished work of Christ in the atonement for sin effectual to the perfection of the sinner: and for this reason saint Paul declares, that by one offering he hath perfected for ever, not all mankind, not all, for whom his blood was shed, but them, that are sanctified.

Thus then we are conducted to our present subject of inquiry, the nature of that sanctifying process, by which the benefit of the universal redemption is applied to individuals for their improvement, establishment, and final salvation.

I need not here dwell on the wonderful love of God in providing for us an atonement, in which his own coequal son was the victim, and the ransom of a ruined world from sin and misery his only reward. I am addressing persons, to whom that great subject is familiar, though (I fear) we none of us are so much impressed by it as we ought. But it is necessary to observe, that this, which is the source of our pardon, is also the commencement of our sanctification, as may be inferred indeed from that same sentence of saint Paul, which has been already quoted, that by one offering he hath perfected for ever them, that are sanctified. Faith therefore in this atonement (it is evident) must be the first step in the sanctification of a sinner.

At the same time by faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ is not meant a mere belief, that such a propitiation was really made by his voluntary self-devotion to death for the sins of the world. It means such a sense of that act of surpassing love, and of our own personal interest in it as will induce us to put our whole trust in that saviour, to confide in his government, and to follow his direction. It is plain, that no one can

be truly said to put his trust in Christ, who does less than this: for any one, who has a right perception of the value of his great salvation, of his own lost condition without it, and of his perfect blessedness, if he can but avail himself of it, (and this is what any sinner upon Earth may attain, who has been taught the evil of sin, and has thus been driven to look for deliverance from it in Jesus Christ) cannot but desire to be led by such a saviour, to commit the keeping and direction of his soul into his hands, and to obey him, as the captain of his salvation. A blind man would lean with confidence on the arm of his father, or his friend, and walk with security, while he was assured of his guidance. But, if he were timid, and chose rather to grope his way by some fancied skill or sagacity of his own, no one would say, that he placed confidence in the sight, the carefulness, or the fidelity of his conductor: and so also a faith in Christ, which does not lead us to trust ourselves entirely to his direction, is stigmatized in scripture, as a dead faith, (that is in fact no faith at all, any more than a dead body is a man), and cannot profit.

It is further evident however, that such a

faith as has been described cannot be unaccompanied with repentance : for he, who places confidence in Jesus Christ, and is determined henceforth to be directed by him in all things, has in that very determination repented of sin, begun a new course, adopted a principle of action, contrary to the corrupt tendencies of nature, and in short turned to God from all idols, to serve the living and true God.

Now to a person in this state of mind the holy scriptures offer a free pardon of all his sins : for what less than this can be understood, when saint Paul declares—'Through this 'man is preached unto you the forgiveness of 'sins, and by him all, that believe, are justi-'fied from all things, from which ye could not 'be justified by the law of Moses'—? and again in his epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, he says without any restriction or reserve—'We have redemption through his 'blood, even the forgiveness of sins.' Even under the old dispensation the Lord's invitation by his prophets was equally gracious and encouraging : for—'Come now ! and let us 'reason together !'—saith the Lord by Isaiah,

'Though your sins be, as scarlet, they shall 'be, as white as snow. Though they be red, 'like crimson, they shall be, as wool.'— : and indeed to him give not one, or two, but all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins ; and our saviour himself in full ratification of all foregoing predictions promises not only pardon, but peace to all, who come to him. 'Come unto me,' (said he) 'all ye, that 'labor, and are heavy-laden ! and I will give 'you rest.'

Surely then we are authorized to say, that every one, who comes to the saviour in that state of mind, which has just been described, is thereupon pardoned, or in the language of scripture justified. His faith is counted for righteousness. It is not righteousness. But it is counted for it ; and through the gracious acceptance of God, by virtue of the merit of Christ's atonement, and in compliance with the prayer of his prevailing intercession he is justified freely. Consequently, being through the clear testimony of scripture persuaded of this free justification, he is at peace. His consci-

ence is pacified. It bears witness to his faults indeed, which he confesses and deplores. But it assures him also, that they are forgiven. They are covered. There is a man, even the son of God himself, who is a hiding-place for him from the wind of God's anger, a covert from the tempest of his displeasure : and under the shadow of his wings he rests secure. Being justified by faith, as saint Paul describes his condition, he has peace with God through our lord, Jesus Christ.

Thus is the justification of a true disciple of Christ perfect : for it is the act of God, who alone can justify the ungodly, and who graciously receives the penitent and believing sinner back into favour for the sake of his beloved son.

Moreover in the humble and confiding state of mind, in which he applies for justification, and obtains it, his sanctification also is begun : for that state of mind is essentially a holy state, the work of the holy spirit upon his heart : and the faith in Christ's merit and goodness, which is the essence of it, is a holy, nay, as saint Jude calls it in the text, a most holy faith. It is

a right disposition towards God, and inclines the heart, which possesses it, to seek a nearer and closer conformity to the holy will of God.

But may the blessed man, whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered, rest in this stage of his progress? May he be left alone, as if he had already attained, either were already perfect, and had no further work to perform, nor any higher attainments in grace to acquire?

I fear among the multitude of expedients, by which the perverted ingenuity of a fallen mind, aided by the malicious industry of an ever-present tempter, contrives to elude the plain testimony of the word of God, and to neglect without self-reproach the obvious duty of a christian, one is the readiness to substitute a correct apprehension of the doctrine of justification by faith for the actual life of a christian, which ought to be engrafted upon it. Thus a truth, which, as it stands in scripture, is the element of holiness, the commencement of a new life, in which God is served, and self denied, and the varied graces of the christian character are successively developed in their

season, and matured by experience and practice, becomes merely the shibboleth of a party, a convenient phrase, by the ready use of which, combined with some conventional observances, and an abstinence from some worldly amusements, the neophyte in doctrine passes for a converted character, and is received without further inquiry, as a faithful and established christian.

But this is not the system of the gospel. Ye, brethren, have not so learned Christ, if so be, that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

It is true, that the faith, which has been described, cannot be inactive. It will work. It will work by love ; and it will thus have a sanctifying tendency and character. Moreover it is itself, as has been already intimated, and must not be forgotten, a holy principle, being derived from the holy spirit of God, and must

needs partake of the purity of the source, from which it springs. He, who has it, is, as saint Peter declares of him, born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Yet still it is only a seed ; and it is planted in a heart, where it is sure to be surrounded, and liable to be choked by weeds of a different origin and riper growth. It therefore requires protection, nurture, cultivation, watchfulness : and it is with this especial view, that the christian ministry is constituted, that those, who are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing, may not only sow, but watch, and guard, and water, and tend that spiritual seed, which is at present but a germ, to be expanded into life and fruitfulness. Saint Jude in the text represents this work under a different image, that of building up ourselves in our most holy faith ; by which phrase he intimates, that although the ministers of the gospel are appointed, to help us in this work, yet it is to be our own work still. We are to build up ourselves in our most holy faith, or, as saint Paul expresses it, to work out our own salvation

with fear and trembling. In short, when we are justified by faith in that redeeming mercy, which has forgiven us all trespasses, we in that act of faith apprehend Christ, or, as saint Paul corrects the expression, we are apprehended of Christ Jesus, who however apprehends us for a particular purpose, namely this, that, pressing towards the mark, we may at length attain that perfect holiness, which is the real prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We are thus put in the right way. It remains, that we be careful to continue in it. We have become light in the Lord. It behoves us to walk, as children of light: and this we do in the state of mind, which has been just described, with great advantage; for we then begin to live unto the Lord with heart and hope, when we know, that our sins are forgiven, though still (it should be remembered) we have only begun the christian life, and have need to carry it forward unto perfection.

This however is a point of so much importance to our present inquiry, that it is necessary to dwell on it a little longer. In fact the persuasion, that we have redemption through the

blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of our sins, the persuasion, that our own sins are actually forgiven us through the blood of the cross, appears absolutely essential to that work of sanctification, which the gospel prescribes. If indeed it were our only object to abstain from gross vice, to cultivate certain virtues, and to discharge the duties, which we are commonly reputed to owe to society, this might be brought about by a steady effort of reason, or by a stoical hardihood of temperament. But, if our aim be higher, if it be to realize the divine standard of the gospel, to become partakers of the holiness of God, to be holy, as he is holy, pure, as he is pure, merciful, as he is merciful, to be filled with the spirit of Christ, or in the daring language of saint Paul with all the fulness of God, to exchange our fallen, corrupt nature for an union with his divine and perfect nature, or, as saint Peter sums up the whole particulars of our christian calling in one comprehensive description, to become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption, that is in the world through lust, if this be the scope of our pursuit and desire, no one can imagine, that this can be accomplished,

while we are still laboring under the apprehension of unpardoned sin. The first element in our renewed life is that pure love to God, which arises from a sense of his love to us in freely pardoning our transgressions, and receiving us back into favour. But how is it possible, that we should carry into effect this or any other evangelical precept, while we remain in doubt, whether our sins are indeed blotted out, or whether the God, whom we profess to love, and desire to obey, will yet exact from us the infinite punishment, which they deserve? How can we in such a state of mind rejoice in the Lord alway? How can we sing merrily unto God, our strength, as the psalmist injoins us, or experience that transcendant joy in the holy Ghost, which the apostles describe? But, when our faith lays hold on the justifying righteousness of Christ, then it immediately becomes our first object to please him. The desire of our soul, as the prophet Isaiah declares, is to his name, and to the remembrance of him. When once this belief of the divine word, this reliance on the divine promise is fully established in the soul, it is no longer subject to the spirit of bondage. It is

under the spirit of adoption, and in the free and spontaneous impulse of filial affection aspires to give itself up to the service of God, not doubting his gracious acceptance, but leaning ever on the promise of his heavenly grace. His promises are then the pole-star of our enterprise. The hope, which rests upon them, is the anchor of our souls, a sure and stedfast hope, which entereth into that within the veil: for, as saint Paul says, having these promises, we cleanse ourselves, or, as saint Peter, by these exceedingly great and precious promises we become partakers of the divine nature, until through his grace we are led on by sure and steady advances to perfect holiness in the fear of God, even unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

What then is that process of sanctification, the only remaining process, which we need, but still an indispensable process, by which we are to be built up in our most holy faith, and on which a confiding reliance upon the love of God in Christ Jesus enables us, unworthy as we are, to enter with hope and peace and joy?

First, it having been determined, that a belief

in pardoning mercy is the necessary commencement of that process, we must consider, who are entitled to entertain it: for it cannot be imagined, that all, to whom the knowledge of the way of salvation comes, may thereupon safely believe their own sins to be forgiven. Such belief may be, and often is a delusion: and therefore we are taught, that the faith required must be a living faith, productive of its proper effects, not, that all those effects must follow, before it can be accepted; but it must be such a faith as will produce them in their season: and accordingly, if we are now really devoting ourselves to the service of God, seeking to do his will, and to know it, that we may do it, if, denying ourselves, and taking up our cross, we are following the saviour, if we are earnestly striving against sin, while we rely on his promised aid for success in the struggle, if this be the case with us, and our conscience charge us not with any hypocrisy in this our professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, then, so long as this state of our affections continues, we may assure our hearts before him, and rely on the certainty of his forgiving love.

There are indeed many obstructions to this work: for that belief in pardoning mercy, which is the first step in the process, even when it is right and sincere, may be easily weakened by heedlessness, by neglect, by temptation, by the conflict of worldly desires, and the omission of prayer unto God, or it may be even obliterated by any indulgence in wilful sin. Our next question therefore is—How may the good work, so begun, be maintained, continued, and advanced? What are the helps, afforded to us? and through what means, and by what instrumentality does he, who has thus begun a good work in us, ordinarily carry it on, and perform it until the day of Jesus Christ?

Towards the accomplishment of that work he indeed does much by his providence, and every thing by his grace: for he purges and prunes the branches of his vine continually, that it may bring forth more fruit. With this view he corrects us by his fatherly discipline, and sends us both trials and encouragements, and supplies us with teachers, or warnings, with affliction, or consolation, as he sees to be best for us. But especially he gives his holy Spirit to them, that ask

him, whereby they are weaned from the love of evil, incited to the pursuit of good, and thus rendered more and more meet by gradual advances for their heavenly inheritance.

These however are corrective and spiritual medicines, which the Lord keeps in his own hand, and dispenses according to his sovereign wisdom. There are others, which he entrusts to human agency. Particularly the church does much for us in this respect, providing us with instructions, admonitions, and spiritual guides, administering to us the holy sacraments, and helping us in the worship of God. It holds up the book of God before our eyes, and furnishes us with ministers and pastors, whose duty it is to watch for our souls, to feed us with food, convenient for us, to admonish us in danger, and comfort us in trouble from the word of God, and further to exercise our christian love, and form us into a holy body in the Lord.

But after all, we must still build up ourselves. We must make use of the helps, which the church affords us, and place ourselves under the guiding influence of the holy Ghost, that so we may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our

lord and saviour, Jesus Christ, being fruitful in every good work, as saint Paul describes the character of a growing christian, increasing in the knowledge of God, and strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. The manner, in which we must proceed in thus building up ourselves in our most holy faith, and availing ourselves for that purpose of all the means of grace, which are afforded to us, is the subject, which must occupy the remainder of this discourse.

The great business is to keep our faith and love in perpetual exercise, not to let them droop from inaction, or from the intrusion of other objects of desire, but rather to strengthen them by what saint Paul calls the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our lord, Jesus Christ, in the sight of God, our father.

In short the life of a christian, who has once felt the misery of sin, and the greatness of a saviour's love, and has thence been led to surrender himself by the constraining influence of love to the disposal of his redeemer, ought to be manifestly different from that of those, who, although

partaking of the same ordinances, are actuated by another spirit. ‘ Ye,’ (says saint Paul to his Corinthian converts) ‘ ye are our epistle, known ‘ and read of all men.’ The divine impress ought to be legible in the life of a christian; and we should be compelled to take knowledge of him, that he has been with Jesus.

But the main question is—In what should this difference consist? Not certainly in any studied difference of speech or manner. This appears from our lord's directions to those, who fast, to wash their hands, and anoint their face, that they appear not unto men to fast, but unto their father, who is in Heaven.

Neither should it consist in any conventional code of regulations, not to be found in scripture, for the government of such persons as agree in sentiment upon the main doctrines of the gospel. A church indeed may enact such regulations, if they be consistent with scripture, in the exercise of discipline over all its members. But individuals should beware of imposing any arbitrary rules for distinguishing a true christian, such as adherence to a particular sect, or the use of party-names and phrases, or for exalting particular

believers, into a class of superior sanctity to the rest, as in the imposition of celibacy, or the beatification of monastic austerities, instead of looking to the prevailing spirit and temper of his life, lest they should fall into the error of traditional additions to the word of God. In all such cases the attention, which is fixed on something, which is unnecessary, is withdrawn from that, which is essential.

The true objects of concern for a christian, after he has been awakened to a sense of his condition, and thus turned from darkness to light, that he may be also turned from the power of Satan unto God, are those, which have been already quoted from the epistle to the Ephesians, to put off the old man, and to put on the new.

It is true, that every justified sinner has already done in a measure both these acts. But yet we perceive, that saint Paul impresses even upon such persons the duty of doing them still. A new nature has indeed been imparted to them, without which they could not attempt it in earnest. But the old nature remains: and there is ample need for all their circumspection and watchfulness, for self-examination and prayer, that the

old nature may not regain its ascendancy, and that the new nature may grow. We find the apostle, Paul, himself lamenting, that there was still sin in his members, and that such was its potency, that, even when he would do good, evil was present with him, insomuch that while with the mind he served the law of God, he yet felt himself to a certain extent overmastered in the flesh, or through the remainder of a fallen nature, to serve the law of sin.

Nor can this conflict ever be brought to an end till death. So long as we are in this tabernacle, we have a fight to maintain, as well as a race to run; and it is incumbent upon us vigilantly to guard against the entrance of sinful inclinations, and for that purpose to pre-occupy our minds as far as possible with heavenly pursuits and aspirations.

Hence, while a christian continues in the world, it becomes him to be ever on his guard, that he may not be of the world. With this view he should continually study and meditate upon the rules of action, which are prescribed in the holy scriptures, and compare his own mode of thinking and acting, as shewn in his daily practice,

with no other standard, but that. He will thus see much to lament even in actions, which the world deems indifferent, and will especially strive to fortify himself on that side, on which he finds himself most easily tempted to transgress. He will consequently feel it necessary not only to keep a strict watch over all his thoughts, words, and actions, but to say with David—'Search me, O Lord, 'and know my ways! Prove me, and examine 'my thoughts, and see, if there be any wicked 'way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!'

It would be endless to enter into particulars on this subject. But a true christian will perceive the need of guarding every avenue, by which temptation enters. The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life will all have his attention. The falls of eminent saints will convince him, that this vigilance must never be intermitted, that he must never consider himself safe against a surprise. If David, the man after God's own heart, was betrayed into adultery and murder, if Peter, the foremost of the apostles, denied his master, if Moses, the meekest man upon the face of the earth, sinned by presumption, surely it cannot be an easy task

for any man to put off the old man with his deeds. We must even in this part of our work seek the grace of God, the aid of the church, and the counsel of our fellow-christians in addition to studying the word of God, observing the example of saints, and giving careful attention to the besetting infirmities of our own character.

But after all this labour will be fruitless, if it be prosecuted alone. In order to put off effectually the old man with his deeds, we must strive to put on the new. It is, when the principles of the new nature, which Christ imparts, have taken deep root within us, that the old nature, inherited from Adam, will begin to give way. There is not room within us for two such principles to bear sway. One of them must expel the other; and, though the struggle be maintained to the end, one or other of them must at all times have the ascendancy: and it is only by cultivating the fruits of the spirit, that we can ensure the decay of the fruits of natural corruption. This shews us the necessity of having the objects of our faith and hope and love kept constantly in view. The wonderful love of God in the whole œconomy of salvation, the atonement, intercession, and priestly

office of Christ, the communion of the holy Ghost, the nature of heavenly blessedness, the happiness of a state, in which there is no sin, but where love is perfect, God seen, as he is, and all orders of created beings united in his worship and service, these are contemplations, which cannot be constantly pursued without producing in us some of those emotions, which belong to our new nature, or without rendering the inferior and grovelling pursuits of the flesh, or fallen nature, comparatively distasteful. But it is not contemplation alone, which will answer the purpose. There must be an active exercise of christian graces, a real performance of those good works, which God has ordained for us to walk in, particularly of those works, which unite us to the brotherhood of Christ, and tend to promote most directly the glory of God, and the temporal and eternal welfare of our fellow-creatures. Thus we cannot but feel the necessity of aiding those missions to the Jew and the heathen, which are in progress, as well as of promoting, where we can, the relief and mitigation of human suffering abroad and at home, especially, as seen in the slave, the prisoner, the diseased, the mourner,

and him, that has none to help him. In short he, who gives himself up most entirely to the service of God and Christ by devoting his time, thoughts, labour, and property, without neglecting any more immediate duties, to the advancement of those objects, for which our blessed saviour came into the world, will, if he walk humbly, prayerfully, and watchfully, make most progress in those two great departments of the christian life, the mortification of sin, and improvement in holiness.

Those, who follow this practice in their daily life, will best understand the exhortation of saint Jude in the text—'Ye, beloved, building up 'yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in 'the holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of 'God, looking for the mercy of our lord, Jesus 'Christ, unto eternal life!' For they by the very supposition of their case are cultivating the love of God from day to day, and studying to keep themselves in that love by exercising their faith in it, praying for a larger supply of it, and endeavoring to practise such duties as seem most directly to flow from it, while still the imperfections of their best service, and the power of

temptation to draw them aside continually from the work, which they deliberately prefer and love, will feelingly convince them, that in their best estate, and after their greatest attainments they must still look only for the mercy of our lord, Jesus Christ, that they may attain unto eternal life.

But I may be asked—'What then is the place 'of the christian sacraments in the business of 'sanctification?' I have already said, that the aid of the church is necessary and indispensable in the process of our sanctification: and of that aid the administration of the sacraments forms an essential, and a principal part. They are both of them outward signs as well as effectual instruments of an inward grace, wrought in the heart by the spirit of God, which ought to be anxiously cultivated by all those means, which I have been describing. Those, who are really intent on building up themselves in their most holy faith, cannot wilfully neglect any of the means of grace; and least of all can they neglect the sacraments of their lord and saviour. They indeed are the persons, who will take the greatest de-

light in frequenting the Lord's table, because they maintain in their spirits the most lively sense of his love, and strive in their daily lives to realize the vows of their baptism. To them therefore by virtue of his institution and promise these sacraments are life-giving ordinances, because in them through the operation of his grace they meet the corresponding dispositions, which are necessary to turn them to profit. As baptism is to them a baptism of the holy Ghost, so also is the Lord's supper to them a communion of his most blessed body and blood. To others, who profane them by irreverent abuse, they minister wrath by adding to their other crimes the misuse of the sacraments.

Thus, brethren, sanctification, the subject, which has been brought under investigation in the course of lectures, now drawing to a close, appears to be a work of God, carried on by his Spirit in the heart of a sinner, and producing in him first repentance of sin, faith in the atoning blood of the saviour, and love to God, and then from that stock bringing forth successively through the means of grace, provided for us, the

several fruits of the Spirit, humility, self-abasement, thankfulness, benevolence, and still further hope of glory, joy in the holy Ghost, contentedness under affliction, habits of earnest devotion, and an active desire to consecrate all his energies to the advancement of the cause of God and Christ in the world.

Wherever such qualities are exhibited, there can be no doubt, that the work of sanctification is going forward. They are not the qualities of corrupt nature. They are implanted by the holy Spirit of God: and God will recognise his own work, and honor, and reward it. Still it is carried on amidst many interruptions, and very imperfectly; the sense of which should increase our humility, and stimulate our prayers. But he, who has begun this good work in us, will, if we do not forsake him, perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, when the work of grace will be perfect, and sin with all its bitter consequences abolished in the victory of the cross.

In the mean time the christian's motto must be—'Onward!' The Lord in answer to his prayer giveth him more grace; and, while a single sin remains unsubdued, his work is unfi-

nished, and he must give all diligence to add to his faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity.

From all, that has been now said, it appears, that in the divine process of sanctification a true christian under the guiding hand of the holy Spirit has much to do. That process is indeed most justly called by Scougal the life of God in the soul of man, and by Horsley the mysterious commerce of the believer's soul with the divine Spirit. But though it is the life, and consequently the work of God, yet it is conducted through the operation of his own faculties, and by the instrumentality of his personal actions. In justification he was only a recipient. He must come for it indeed in a humble, penitent, and believing frame. He must consequently be renewed in the spirit of his mind, and is in that sense a new creature already. But, before these new dispositions have manifested themselves by any outward act, except that of prayer, he is accepted and pardoned. He is thus far then only a recipient of the divine mercy. But, having received it, having obtained mercy of the Lord

to be faithful, he henceforth becomes an actor. The faith, by which he was justified, becomes an actuating principle, prompting him to every good word and work; and he desires to live the rest of his time in the flesh not to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. He has much therefore to do. He has, as has been already said, and cannot be too often repeated, an old nature to put away; he has a new nature to cultivate and call into exercise: and these two objects will furnish him with abundant employment for every day; for he will find upon every remission of his toil the old man with his deeds resuming his power over him, and the divine life proportionably falling into decay; and this discovery will stimulate his prayers for pardon and grace, will shew him the necessity of increased vigilance, and engage him in a more vigorous hostility to those evil principles, which, however they may be disguised, have a tendency to drown men in destruction and perdition. But he will also find it necessary to occupy himself zealously in all those active employments, which call forth the energies of his renewed nature, in public and private prayer and praise, in sacramental duties, in

self-examination, in conference with those, who are wiser than himself, in the study of scripture, of good books, and instructive examples, and in those works of piety, charity, self-devotion, and self-denial, which are acceptable to God, and beneficial to men. In proportion as he abounds in these works and pursuits, in proportion to the spirit of love, of humility, and of dependence on God, in which he enters into them, and to the purity of the spiritual graces, which he exercises in the course of them, will be his improvement in the life of godliness, and consequently in sanctification.

We must not however omit in this sketch, however cursory, of the character of a renewed christian, his behaviour under unmerited reproach or persecution. The apostles very soon after the descent of the holy Spirit on the day of pentecost began to shew that most distinguishing proof of their changed disposition, which consisted in rejoicing, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus: and conformably to this sentiment saint Peter asks—'What glory is it, if, when ye be 'buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it pati-

'ently? But, if, when ye do well, and suffer 'for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable 'with God.' Happily in this country we have long enjoyed an unprecedented exemption from persecution. But yet the conduct of a christian under unjust treatment and calumny is often put to the proof; and the passive virtues of the gospel, the disposition to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, and to abstain from murmuring and complaint under trial are at all times called into occasional exercise, and prove, what manner of spirit he is of.

I do not specify any of the strictly religious exercises, in which he will needs be engaged by following this course. In these particulars indeed he will gladly conform to the rules of his church, and to the admonitions of his spiritual superiors. But yet the earnestness of his prayers, of his confessions, and of his thanksgivings will be proportioned not to the rule of his instructor, but to the depth of his piety: and that, if it be real, will prompt him to many acts, which cannot be prescribed beforehand by any

general law. It will dispose him for instance to retire, and to fast, when he finds, that special sins require special mortification, or the entrance on some new and untried sphere of duty calls for a more than ordinary separation from worldly engagements, that he may call upon God for direction ; or, if he feels his own affections grow cold, or perceives, that those of his family need to be stimulated and enlarged, it will incline him to join with others for united worship and mutual instruction. But the great point is to be always every day occupied in doing the work of the Lord, whether that be the labour of his worldly calling, to be performed, as under his eye, and in submission to his appointment, or, during the intervals of such direct calls of duty, in the exercise of christian affections, and in the active exertions, to which christianity invites its disciples : and, lest this course of continual self-scrutiny and faithful service should seem irksome to us, though in truth it will be found, that the service of the Lord is perfect freedom, and the cultivation of christian graces a source of the purest joy, the Lord has given us the highest of all encouragements to the pursuit of

it by promising to those, who abound most in the works of godliness a more abundant entrance into his heavenly kingdom. Although the works of the purest saints are imperfect, and unworthy to be noticed by the judge of all, he will not suffer one of them, not even a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, to be without its reward. Although the reward is altogether of grace, not of debt, yet will it be proportioned at the last day to our work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in the Lord. They, who have suffered most for Christ, will be most highly exalted. There will be ten cities, or five cities, according as there have been ten or five talents laid out in his service ; and, while every vestige of evil will be rooted out of every sanctified soul, the attainments, which have been made on Earth in the grace and life of the gospel, will measure the degree of blessedness, to be bestowed in the kingdom above. Thus many, that are first, will be last, and the last first ; and yet there will be no room for jealousy, where all will be rewarded up to the full measure of their capacity, and infinitely beyond their desert.

Here then is an occupation, worthy of immortal creatures, not like the pursuits of this world, where many run, and few obtain, an occupation, where all may succeed, and where the successes, already gained, admit of infinite extension. The purest saint on Earth may be purer still, the holiest holier; the best love may be improved, the liveliest devotion invigorated; and, while we feel, that our distance is still infinite from the mark in view, and yet, that our services, however defective, are regarded with favour, we have every motive to increased energy in the work of the Lord, that we may be more occupied in his service, more devoted to his cause, more filled with his love, and that at length our whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our lord and saviour, Jesus Christ.

That coming indeed of Jesus Christ will be the great object of a christian's hope. In proportion as he gains experience in the warfare against the powers of evil, he will perceive, that his present condition is far indeed beneath

the standard, to which his hopes are directed; and he will therefore look forward with joy and gratitude to that day, when all the multitude of the saved will be raised, to meet their returning lord, and enter together into his joy. The expectation of that day will add strength to his patience, and vigour to his hope, and in short will tend to make him stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as he knows, that his labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Let then those of us, who have already measured the greater portion of their race, labor to bring forth more fruit in their age, that they may be fat and well-liking! and let the young, who have as yet only commenced their course, recollect, that they have a work to do, a race to run, a conflict to maintain, that life is not given them for idleness and frivolity, but that as they have been redeemed with precious blood, and called with a holy calling, so it is required even from the young, that the word of God should dwell in them, and that they should overcome the

wicked one! Let them give their early years to God! and then they may be sure, that he will not forsake them, when they are old and grey-headed. The work of sanctification is a progressive work, and ought to be begun early, and continued without intermission, that it may be perfected in the day of the Lord. Let them not rest contented with low attainments in godliness, but, remembering, that the Lord has invited them to a heavenly kingdom, endeavor to cast off all habits and practices, which are unsuitable to so high a dignity, and to walk worthy of the Lord, who has called them to glory and virtue! In short as it is mercy, which has called them, and mercy, which has redeemed them, so it is mercy also, which alone can bring them to eternal life through the faith and hope of the gospel. Being justified by the son of God, they must be sanctified by his spirit, that so they may attain unto salvation.

Let me then take leave of you, brethren, in the language of saint Jude in the text! 'May ye, 'beloved, building up yourselves in your most

'holy faith, praying in the holy Ghost, keep 'yourselves in the love of God, looking for the 'mercy of our lord, Jesus Christ, unto eternal 'life!'

Now unto him, that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you, faultless, before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, our saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and ever! Amen.

NOTES.

P. 3. *To give names to every living creature implies an intimate knowledge of all their properties.*

It is rather a singular coincidence to find a confirmation of this argument in the writings of Cicero. After speaking of the varied powers of the human mind he accords an appropriate meed of praise to the authors of useful inventions, beginning with the person, *qui primus, quod summæ sapientiæ Pythagoræ visum est, omnibus rebus imposuit nomina.* Tusc. quæst. l. 1. 62.

P. 10. *The wolf dwelt with the lamb.*

This fact is not directly stated in scripture. But the declaration, that the Lord, God, brought every beast of the field and every fowl of the air unto Adam, to see, what he would call them, seems almost to imply it ; and the extensive prevalence of a tradition to that effect, like that of the denial of animal food to the antediluvians, is worthy of some regard.

> Ante Jovem nulli subigebant arva coloni.
> Ille malum virus serpentibus addidit atris,
> Prædarique lupos jussit, pontumque moveri.
>
> Virg. Georg. 1. 125—130.

It may be added, that metaphorical allusions have commonly

some original foundation to rest upon, and derive much of their beauty from that concealed reference, unconsciously recognised, if I may so express myself, by the hearer or reader. Hence I reckon the passage from the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, referred to in the sermon, among the concurrent evidences of the fact, which is assumed there.

It is true, that the structure of the digestive organs in carnivorous and graminivorous animals is essentially different; and the case supposed seems to infer the necessity of an organic change in the constitution of many animals after the fall. I leave this difficulty to be settled between the critic and the anatomist. It does not however appear to me greater than belongs to the only other alternative, namely, that either death and mutual destruction existed in the paradisaical state, or that tigers and lions and other fierce creatures were brought into the garden of Eden, to be named, and then turned out of it, to indulge their savage propensities. I am not certain, that our knowledge of the theory of digestion is so complete as to render it altogether incredible, that carnivorous animals should once have fed on roots or herbs without more than a modification of their present organs; nor on the other hand is it altogether incredible, that, whereas it was a part of the sentence, pronounced upon the earth, when Adam sinned, that it should bring forth thorns and thistles, which it did not before, some analogous change should also have taken place in the nature and constitution of the animals, who certainly partake of many of the unhappy consequences of the fall, and may therefore be presumed to have partaken in some correspondent measure of the benefits of human innocence.

P. 25. *By τῷ πονηρῷ he must mean a person.*

This argument, as it is stated in the lecture, being complete, it was not thought expedient to encumber it with further particulars. Yet the frequent use of the phrase, ὁ πονηρὸς, in this epistle strengthens the conclusion. Thus the words, which almost immediately precede the text, are—'Ὁ πονηρὸς οὐχ ἅπτεται αὐτοῦ.'—; it is twice said to young men—'Νενικήκατε τὸν πονηρόν.' ii. 13, 14.; and in ch. iii. 12. Cain is declared to have been of that wicked one. The use of the word, κεῖται, may be paralleled in that common phrase in Homer—

Ταῦτα θεῶν ἐν γούνασι κεῖται. Od. 1. 400;—

and a similar expression may be found in Polybius, as—Κεῖσθαι γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ σφετέρᾳ πίστει. iii. 15., and τὸ συνέχον τοῖς Βυζαντίοις τῆς ὑπομονῆς τοῦ πολέμου κείμενον ἐν ταῖς κατα τὸν Ἀχαιὸν ἐλπίσι. iv. 51.

P. 39. *They perceived a corrupt principle, actuating the conduct of the great mass of mankind, and drawing them aside from those paths, which even in this world lead to happiness and peace.*

There is a remarkable acknowledgment to this effect in the Tusculan questions—'Sunt enim ingeniis nostris semina innata 'virtutum, quæ, si adolescere liceret, ipsa nos ad beatam vitam 'perducerent. Nunc autem, simulatque editi in lucem et sus-'cepti sumus, in omni continuo pravitate, et in summa opini-'onum perversitate versamur, ut pæne cum lacte nutricis 'errorem suxisse videamur.' Cic. Tusc. Quæst. iii. 2.

Pp. 74, 75. *His offering was from the fruits of the ground, a mere thank-offering, which implied a forgetfulness of that truth,*

which seems to have been inculcated from the very time of the fall, and even to be intimated in the provision of the skins of beasts for their clothing, that without shedding of blood is no remission.

In this reasoning the divine origin of sacrifice is assumed. This indeed is still a disputed point among divines. But I cannot bring myself to doubt a conclusion, of which although there is no direct evidence in scripture, yet the presumptive evidence is to my mind irresistible and decisive.

The origin of sacrifice must be either human, or divine. If human, these two inferences must follow, first, that, before any instance of death had occurred in the world, before any experience had shewn, in what way it might be inflicted, or what wounds would prove mortal, (for those, who believe, that animals were slain by divine command in Paradise for clothing, will hardly contend against the divine institution of sacrifice) our first parents conceived from the impulse of their own understanding, that it would be an acceptable service to God to inflict death on some of his creatures, and secondly, that without any distinct notion of the doctrine of atonement they invented a mode of worship, which afterwards proved to be the very mode, which almighty wisdom appointed, as the way, by which he chose to be approached by a sinner. Both these suppositions are alike incredible, the first in its own nature, the second, because no other instance can be shewn, in which men have invented a way, in which God might be acceptably served. On the contrary we find him jealous of will-worship, and refusing to be approached by any other method than that, which he has himself prescribed, having even directed both Moses and Solomon, Ex. xxv. 40, 1 Chron. xxviii. 19., to frame all things, relating to his worship, accor-

ding to a pattern, which he had devised. On the contrary, if sacrifice was from the beginning a divine institution, the whole revelation of scripture is in harmony with that assumption. A prophecy of a future deliverer having been afforded immediately after the fall, the rite of sacrifice was thereupon instituted, to throw light upon that mysterious promise, and to keep it in remembrance. Probably animals were at once slain, as an atonement, and the offending pair directed to clothe themselves with their skins. More particular directions concerning the order of sacrifice were given in after ages. But the rite itself continued, till the only meritorious sacrifice, of which all others were types and shadows, was offered upon the cross.

Still to all this reasoning may be opposed the alleged improbability, that, if sacrifice was originally a divine appointment, the first institution of it should not have been distinctly recorded.

But this negative argument from the silence of history is very precarious. It may be stated thus. The divine original of sacrifice is not recorded. Therefore its origin was not divine. The divine appointment of the distinction between clean and unclean animals, which was in use before the flood, is not recorded. Therefore its origin was not divine. So too it has been argued, that the observance of the sabbath before the time of Moses is not recorded. Therefore it was not observed; and even the recorded institution of it ought to be interpreted proleptically.

But, though none of these particulars is recorded, indications of them arise in the course of history, by which they are implied. Thus sacrifice began immediately after the fall. The distinction of clean and unclean animals was in use before the

flood. The practice of observing seven days, as an interval of time, had grown into a custom at the time of the flood. Gen. viii. 10, 12. From these several particulars, which are recorded, those, which are not recorded, may be inferred with great probability. Indeed our lord himself has taught us to draw extensive inferences from incidental hints in the Mosaic narrative ; for he enforces the law of marriage by a reference to Gen. ii. 24., from which text the prohibition of polygamy is only to be collected by indirect inference : and though we are not, like our lord, infallible interpreters, yet his reasoning at least shews, that in the brevity of the Mosaic narrative more may often be implied than is directly obvious.

This however is not the entire strength of the case. The apostle lays down the distinct maxim, that without shedding of blood is no remission. Heb. ix. 22. This therefore is the principle, on which the sacrifice of victims in the way of expiation is accepted. How then can we reasonably doubt, that what the Lord accepts from sinners, he also directed to be observed by them ? But the sacrifice of victims does not stand alone. It is coupled with the distinction of clean and unclean animals, which was clearly in use before the flood : and by what authority was that distinction made, and for what purpose ? Can it be conceived, that it was made with any other design than that of determining, what animals might be offered in sacrifice to God, and what not ? and, this being a purely arbitrary distinction, who was authorized to make it, but God himself ? Accordingly we find the distinction observed in directing the number of animals, which by his appointment were to be received into the ark, and that no doubt with purposed respect to the sacrifice, which was offered by Noah on coming out of it. Gen. vii. 2. viii. 20, 21. Here

then we come very near, we come within one step of a divine institution of sacrifice : for we find God in appointing the number of animals, to be preserved in the ark, sanctioning a distinction between them, which had respect to that very sacrifice, which was to be offered afterwards. Here are two arbitrary appointments, sacrifice, and the distinction of animals. The origin of neither is expressly recorded. But the two are closely connected together ; and in regard to one of them we have seen the Lord interposing with a direct and most important command. Surely then the probability is very strong, that both were originally appointed by him ; and, when we afterwards perceive both appointments incorporated into the Mosaical law, that probability is strikingly confirmed. For, since it is admitted, that sacrifice was at one time expressly appointed by God to be a symbolical representation of the great atonement of the cross, and since at that time all its minutest observances, including among others the distinction of animals to be offered, were prescribed by him, is it not infinitely more probable, that the whole should have been originally directed by him for that use, to which it was ultimately made subservient, than that it was invented by men first, though ignorant of its use and purport, and adopted by God afterwards ? Indeed the introduction and the abolition of sacrifice are alike destitute of specific record ; and if in the latter case the discontinuance is an inference from its purpose having been fulfilled, it is only a parallel reasoning, though an opposite application of it, to infer its original appointment from the purpose it was destined to serve.

On the whole, I consider the following paragraph from Shuckford's sacred and profane history of the world connected, as a just representation of the subject.

'Some christian writers have imagined, tha the original of 'sacrifices was human, men being prompted by reason to 'offer to God by way of gratitude part of those things, for 'the use of which they were indebted to his bounty. I 'should rather think the contrary opinion true. God ap- 'pointed the skins of beasts for clothing to our first parents; 'which could not be obtained without killing them: and this 'seems to intimate, that the creatures were at that time ap- 'pointed for sacrifice. It looks unlikely, that God should 'order the creatures to be slain merely for clothing, when 'mankind were already supplied with another sort of covering, 'but very probable, that, if he appointed a creature to be 'offered in sacrifice, he might direct the offerer to use the 'skin for clothing: and perhaps from this institution was de- 'rived the appointment in Leviticus, that the priest should 'have the skin of the burnt offering. There are several con- 'siderations, which do (I think) very strongly intimate, both 'that sacrifices of living creatures were in use, before man- 'kind had leave to eat flesh, and also, that the origin of 'sacrifices was at first by divine appointment. The talmu- 'dists agree, that holocausts of the creatures were offered in 'the earliest times, and long before men had leave to eat 'flesh; and it is very plain, that Noah offered the creatures, 'before God had granted leave to eat them; for that grant is 'represented to be made after Noah's sacrifice, and not be- 'fore it; and it is evident, that the distinction of clean and 'unclean beasts was before the flood: and it cannot be con- 'ceived, how there could be such a distinction, if the crea- 'tures were neither eaten, nor used for sacrifice. Abel's 'sacrifice seems rather to have been a burnt offering of the 'firstlings of his flock than an oblation of wool and cream.

'The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews took it to be so. 'He supposed Abel's offering to be θυσία, a sacrifice of a crea- 'ture killed, and not an oblation, which would have been 'called προσφορὰ, or δῶρον: and as to the first origin of sacri- 'fices, it is extremely hard to conceive them to be a human 'institution, because we cannot this way give any tolerable 'account of the reasons of them. If mankind had in the 'first ages no immediate revelation, but came to their know- 'ledge of God by the exercise of their reason, it must be 'allowed, that such notions as they had of God, such would 'be their way and method of serving him. But then how is 'it possible, that they should go into such notions of God as 'to make it seem proper for them to offer sacrifices in order 'to make atonement for their sins? Reason, if it led to any, 'would lead men to a reasonable service. But the worship of 'God in the way of sacrifice cannot (I think) appear to be of 'this sort, if we take away the reason, that may be given for 'it from revelation.' Shuckford. Vol. i. Book 2. pp. 80—82.

I subjoin a single sentence from the second of Mr. Garbett's Bampton lectures, which embodies in few words the whole principle of the foregoing argument.

'The discovery of the atonement baffles reason: and there- 'fore the type of it would be beyond its invention.' Garbett's Bampton Lectures, V. 1. L. 2. P. 121.

P. 76. *The sons of Seth invoked by the name, Jehovah.*

This is the literal translation of the words in Gen. iv. 26., rendered in our bibles.—'Then began men to call on the 'name of the Lord.' So Gen. xii. 8.

P. 78. *The first created beings, which were worshipped upon*

Earth, were those great lights, which God hath set in the firmament of the heaven.

Mr. Bryant's System of Mythology is throughout an elaborate demonstration of one position, namely this, that 'all the 'Grecian names of deities, however appropriated, were origi- 'nally titles of one God, and related to the sun.' P. 46.

Sir William Jones delivers the following judgment upon the question. 'Although I cannot believe with Newton,' (says he) 'that ancient mythology was nothing, but historical truth 'in a poetical dress, nor with Bacon, that it consisted solely 'of moral and metaphysical allegories, nor with Bryant, that 'all the heathen divinities are only different attributes and 'representations of the sun, or of deceased progenitors, but 'conceive, that the whole system of religious fables rose, like 'the Nile, from several distinct sources, yet I cannot but 'agree, that one great spring and fountain of all idolatry in 'the four quarters of the globe was the veneration, paid by 'men to the vast body of fire, which looks from his sole 'dominion, like the god of this world.'

Discourses before the Asiatic society. P. 33.

P. 84. Τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐὸν φθόνερον τε καὶ ταραχώδες. Herod. Clio. 32.

Two other passages in the same author illustrate this sentiment. One is in a letter from Amasis to Polycrates on his long-continued prosperity. 'Ἐμοὶ δὲ αἱ σαὶ μεγάλαι εὐτυχίαι οὐκ ἀρεσκουσι, τὸ θεῖον ἐπισταμένῳ, ὡς ἔστι φθονερόν.' Thal. 40. The other occurs in a conversation between Artabanus and Xerxes, in which the former after drawing an unfavorable picture of the calamities, which are incident to human life even in its happiest state, concludes thus, 'Ὁ δὲ Θεὸς, γλυκὺν

'γεύσας τὸν αἰῶνα, φθονερὸς ἐν αὐτῳ εὑρίσκεται ἐών.' Pol. 46. For this misrepresentation of the character of the divine being Herodotus is reproved by Plutarch in a treatise περι τῆς 'Ηροδοτου κακοηθείας. ''Α γὰρ αὐτὸς ἐφρόνει περὶ τῶν θεῶν,' (says he) 'τῳ 'Σόλωνι προστριβόμενος, κακοηθείαν τῃ βλασφημίᾳ προστίθησι.'

P. 84, 85. *The very notion of sanctification, or of acquiring a higher degree of moral goodness ceased to be an element in heathen religion.*

Although the words, *sanctitas* and *sanctus*, are of frequent occurrence in Latin writers, they do not appear to convey the idea of purity of conduct. They are applied to acts of piety, or religious worship, but have no connexion with justice, benevolence, or moral duty. 'Est enim pietas justitia adver-'sum deos. Sanctitas autem est scientia colendorum deorum.' Cic. de Nat. D. 1. 116. 'Et in nostro populo, et in cæteris 'deorum cultus religionumque sanctitates existunt.' Ibid. ii. 5.

There is also a secondary sense, in which the words are used, as implying inviolability, that being an attribute of all religious worship. It is in this sense, that Cicero says—'Sepulchra 'fiunt sanctiora vetustate.' Cic. Phil. 9. 14.—and again—'Quid est sanctius, quid omni religione munitius quam domus 'uniuscujusque civium? Hoc perfugium est ita sanctum om-'nibus, ut inde abripi neminem fas sit.' Cicero pro domo sua. 109. The poets also often use it in this sense, as

> Sanctarum inscitia legum. Hor. Sat. ii. 1. 81.
> Sanctos ausus recludere fontes. Virg. G. ii. 175.
> Sanctum senatum. Virg. Æn. 1. 426.

although they sometimes invest it with a moral grandeur, which does not attach to it in popular, or even philosophical acceptation.

'Sancta ad vos anima, atque istius inscia culpæ,
'Descendam.' Virg. Æn. 12, 647, 648.
'Nec sanctum numen fati protollere fines
'Posse.' Luc. 5, 310, 311.

But in fact the ceremonies of religion were the actual religion of the heathens. Their morality was altogether distinct from it. And this application of words in common use is a strong illustration of the tone of sentiment, which prevailed among the best thinkers and writers in Greece and Rome.

It was the attempt of Socrates to connect morality with religion, which probably proved fatal to him. Yet even in his apology by Xenophon I find traces of the same use of language: for in a passage, where he places ὑβριστὴς, as the opposite term to σώφρων, πολυδάπανος to εὐδίαιτος, δινόφλυξ to μετριοπάτης, and μαλακὸς to φιλόπονος, he represents ἀνὸσιος, unholy, to be the opposite to εὐσεβης, pious, thus making unholiness to be synonymous to impiety, or neglect of the worship, due to the gods, which was the subject in hand.

P. 85. *In the Romish church the adoration, which, under whatever modification, is paid to the virgin, and to the saints, springs from the same origin.*

I need only refer to Middleton's well-known letter from Rome, for proof of the actual derivation of christian from pagan idolatry. The following passages I extract, as marking the identity of idolatry, under whatever form it may appear.

'The adoration of images was reckoned always the princi-
'pal of those gentile rites, that agreeably to the sense of the
'purest ages of christianity are never mentioned in the im-
'perial laws without the epithets of profane, damnable,
'impious, etc. What opinion then can we have of the pre-

'sent practice of the church of Rome, but that by a change 'only of name they have found means to retain the thing, 'and by substituting their saints in the place of the old demi-'gods have but set up idols of their own instead of those of 'their forefathers? in which it is hard to say, whether their 'assurance or their address is more to be admired, who have 'the face to make that the principal part of christian wor-'ship, which the first christians looked upon, as the most 'criminal part even of paganism, and have found means to 'extract gain and great revenues out of a practice, which 'in primitive times would have cost a man both life and 'estate.

'But our notion of the idolatry of modern Rome will 'be much heightened still, and confirmed, as oft as we follow 'them into those temples, and to those very altars, which 'were built originally by their heathen ancestors, the old 'Romans, to the honour of their pagan deities, where we 'shall hardly see any other alteration than the shrine of 'some old hero, filled by the meaner statue of some modern 'saint. Nay. They have not always, as I am well informed, 'given themselves the trouble of making even this change, 'but have been content sometimes to take up with the old 'image, just as they found it, after baptizing it only, as 'it were, or consecrating it anew by the imposition of a 'christian name.

'The noblest heathen temple, now remaining in the 'world, is the pantheon, or rotunda, which, as the inscrip-'tion over the portico informs us, having been impiously 'dedicated of old by Agrippa to Jove and all the gods, was 'piously reconsecrated by pope Boniface the fourth to the 'blessed virgin and all the saints. With this single altera-

'tion it serves as exactly for all the purposes of the popish 'as it did for the pagan worship, for which it was built: 'for as in the old temple every one might find the god 'of his country, and address himself to that deity, whose 'religion he was most devoted to, so it is the same thing 'now. Every one chooses the patron, whom he likes best; 'and one may see here different services, going on at the 'same time at different altars with distinct congregations 'around them, just as the inclinations of the people lead 'them to the worship of this or that particular saint: and 'what better title can the new demigods shew to the ado-'ration, now paid to them, than the old ones, whose shrines 'they have usurped? or how comes it to be less criminal 'to worship images, erected by the pope, than those, which 'Agrippa, or that, which Nebuchadnezzar set up?' Middleton's Letter, pp. 158—162.

But no other evidence needs to be adduced of the virtual identity of Romish with pagan idolatry, than the following argument in a decree of the council of Trent itself, which, mutatis mutandis, might equally serve for the defence of either, 'imagines porro Christi, Deiparæ virginis, et alio-'rum sanctorum in templis præsertim habendas et retinen-'das, eisque debitum honorem et venerationem impertien-'dam, non quod credatur inesse aliqua in iis divinitas vel 'virtus, propter quam sint colendæ, vel quod ab eis sit ali-'quid petendum, vel quod fiducia in imaginibus sit figenda, 'veluti olim fiebat a gentibus, quæ in idolis spem suam 'collocabant, sed quoniam honos, qui eis exhibetur, refertur 'ad prototypa, quæ illæ repræsentant, ita ut per imagines, 'quas osculamur, et coram quibus caput aperimus, et pro-'cumbimus, Christum adoremus, et sanctos, quorum illæ

'similitudinem gerunt, veneremur.' Concilii Tridentini canones. Sessio xxv. Decretum de invocatione.

In this decree a distinction is attempted between heathen idolatry, and that, which has been set up in the christian church, as if the gentiles worshipped the idols themselves, but christians the persons, who are represented by them. Yet it is not difficult to produce from heathen writers the same idea of idolatry, which is here appropriated by the Roman church. Thus Cicero represents it, as the probable purpose, for which images of the gods were formed, 'ut essent simulachra, quæ venerantes, deos ipsos se adire 'crederent.' Cic. de Nat. D. i. 77.

P. 86. *In the course of time the disposition to exalt the object of our worship produced the fiction of the blessed virgin, Mary, the destined mother of our lord, having been exempted from the taint of original sin.*

Burnet, speaking of the early church, says—'Among 'all the saints, that are so much magnified in that age, we 'never find the blessed virgin so much as once mentioned. 'They knew not, where her body was laid. They had no 'tomb for her, no, nor any of her relics, or utensils. But 'upon the occasion of Nestorius's denying her to be the 'mother of God, and by carrying the opposition to that too 'far, it made a progress, sufficient to balance the slowness of 'its beginning. The whole world was then filled with very 'extravagant devotions for her.' Burnet's Exposition. Art. xxii.

At length in the twelfth century Mosheim observes, 'that 'the enthusiastic veneration for the virgin, Mary, which had 'been hitherto carried to such an excessive height, increased 'now instead of diminishing, since her dignity was at this

'time considerably augmented by the new fiction, or inven-'tion, relating to her immaculate conception.' Mosheim. Cent. xii. Part 2. Chap. 4.

Mr. Newman in his Essay on the development of christian doctrine thus traces the progress of this extravagance.

'There was in the first ages' (he admits) 'no public and 'ecclesiastical recognition of the place, which saint Mary holds 'in the œconomy of grace. This was reserved for the fifth 'century. In order to secure a right faith in the manhood 'of the eternal son, the council of Ephesus determined the 'blessed virgin to be the mother of God.

'Thus there was a wonder in Heaven. A throne was seen 'far above all created powers, mediatorial, intercessory, a 'title archetypal, a crown, bright, as the morning star, a 'glory, issuing from the eternal throne, robes, pure, as the 'heavens, and a sceptre over all: and who was the predestined 'heir of that majesty? Who was that Wisdom, and what 'was her name, the mother of fair love and fear and holy 'hope, exalted, like a palm-tree in Engaddi and a rose-plant in 'Jericho, created from the beginning before the world in 'God's counsels, and in Jerusalem was her power? The 'vision is found in the apocalypse, a woman, clothed with the 'sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a 'crown of twelve stars. The votaries of Mary do not exceed 'the true faith. P. 406, 7.

'The supreme and true worship, paid to the almighty, is 'severe, profound, awful. Christ is addressed as true God, 'while he is true man, as our creator and judge, while he is 'most loving, tender, and gracious. On the other hand to-'wards saint Mary the language employed is affectionate 'and ardent, as towards a mere child of Adam, though sub-'dued, as coming from her sinful kindred.' P. 436.

P. 86. *Whether we observe the abominations of buddhism, or hindooism, or advert to the innumerable deities of China, or the impurities of Juggernaut, we see every where a forgetfulness of the awful character of a holy God.*

I. The buddhists do not believe in a first cause. They suppose however, that there is always some superior deity, who has attained to this elevation by religious merit. But they do not regard him, as the governor of the world. Those, who perform works of merit, are admitted to the heavens of the different gods, or are made kings or great men on Earth; and those, who are wicked, are born in the forms of different animals, or consigned to different hells. The happiness of these heavens is described, as entirely sensual. Among works of the highest merit one is the feeding of a hungry, infirm tiger with a person's own flesh. Ward's View of the history, literature, and mythology of the Hindoos. Vol. iii. pp. 424—427.

II. Every Hindoo receives an initiating incantation from some brahmin, who then becomes his spiritual guide, gooroo. Ibid. p. 258. The disciple must promote the welfare of his gooroo by all his actions. If he injure him, in another birth he will become a worm, feeding on ordure. A disciple must honor his gooroo's son and grandson, as he honors the gooroo. Whether the spiritual guide be learned, or ignorant, a vile, or a holy person, a disciple has no other resource, no other way to happiness, but his gooroo. P. 263. To become a religious guide, it is only necessary to be a brahmin, and to be acquainted with the incantations. P. 265. The Hindoos believe, that the repetition of the name of God is an act of adoration. Hence repeating the names of the idols is a popular ceremony

among the Hindoos. P. 282. It is said, that a person obtains whatever he seeks by persevering in this act of adoration. If he be desirous of a wife, or of children, or of money, (say a lac of rupees !), or seek recovery from sickness, or relief from misfortune, he begins to repeat the name of his god, and believes, that the god soon becomes subject to his wishes. P. 283. Some brahmins acknowledge,that not a single Hindoo seeks in his religion any thing of a moral nature. A Hindoo, when he supplicates his god, prays for riches, or for recovery from sickness, or for a son, or for revenge upon his enemy. P. 284. If the god do not grant the requests, and regard the vows, made at these times, the worshipper sometimes vents his rage in angry expressions ; or, if the image be in his own house, he dashes it to pieces. Pp. 287, 288. The Hindoo objects of worship were themselves monsters of vice. Vol. i. i. ci.

III. There are more than a hundred temples in Canton, consecrated to the various systems of religious falsehood, which maintain an ascendancy over the popular mind. There exist also numerous public altars to the deities, who are supposed to preside over the locality, or to exercise a dominion over the different elements, together with countless altars, raised to the household gods. The whole number of priests is estimated at two thousand, who live a monastic life of celibacy as long as they remain inmates of the temple. They lead an idle, sauntering life, and may be seen, standing about the entrance of the temple-precincts, distinguished more by their bare, shaven crowns than by their manners or demeanour from the surrounding crowds of idlers. About a thousand nuns are also supported in the various institutions.

Though confucianism is the only religious system, professed

by the state, the sage, and the scholar, yet every system of superstition exerts its divided influence over the ignorant masses; and by an unhappy inconsistency idolatry, though decried by the learned, is followed and practised by all. Smith's Narrative of an exploratory visit to each of the consular cities of China. Pp. 35, 36.

IV. The characteristics of Moloch's worship are obscenity and blood. Buchanan's Christian Researches at Juggernaut. P. 28.

P. 86, 87. *To satisfy, or rather to silence the clamours of an uneasy conscience by expensive offerings, or laborious pilgrimages, or painful penances, or suicidal practices, or even, as the prophet, Micah, expresses it, by giving the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul.*

I. In the year, 1804, Huree Turku Bhooshunu, a brahmin of Calcutta, aged about sixty, was carried to the river-side at the point of death; and, while there, one of his disciples, Ubhuyu Churunu Mitru, went, to see him. The disciple asked his dying gooroo, if there was any thing, that he wished from him. The gooroo asked him for a hundred thousand rupees. The disciple hesitated, and said he could not give so much. The gooroo then asked him, what he was worth. He said he might be worth about a hundred thousand. But it was not all in rupees. The gooroo asked him to give his children half this sum. This the disciple surrendered, and then asked him, what else he could do for him. He pretended not to want any thing else. But his youngest son, then present, was in want of a pair of gold rings for his wrists, and which he had been unable to give him. The disciple had a son, standing near, who had on a pair.

These rings, worth about five hundred rupees, were immediately taken off, and put on the wrists of the old gooroo's son. The disciple again asked, what else he could do for him. The gooroo requested him to give his eldest son a piece of ground in Calcutta. He gave it. This land was worth twenty thousand rupees. The disciple again asked, if there was any thing further he could do, to please him. The old fellow made apologies, but at length requested him to make a present of five thousand rupees towards the expences of his shraddhu, rites for the repose of the soul. This was added. The next morning the gooroo died. Ward iii. 264, 265.

II. We have been joined by several large bodies of pilgrims, perhaps two thousand in number, who have come from various parts of northern India. Some of them, with whom I have conversed, say, that they have been two months on their march, travelling slowly in the hottest season of the year with their wives and children. Some old persons are among them, who wish to die at Juggernaut. Numbers of pilgrims die on the road. Buchanan's Christian Researches, p. 19.

III. In January, 1812, the author witnessed the performance of some uncommonly severe acts of religious austerity in the suburbs of Calcutta. A number of Hindoo mendicants had erected huts near one of the descents into the Ganges; and several devotees on this spot daily surrounded themselves with fires of cow-dung, and for three or four hours each day rested on their shoulders with their legs upward, repeating the names of the gods in silence, and counting their bead-rolls. Crowds of people were coming and going, astonished spectators of these infatuated men, who continued their religious austerities in the night by standing up to the neck in the Ganges for two or three hours, counting their beads. Ward iii. 267.

IV. Voluntary suicide is not only practised to a dreadful extent among the Hindoos ; but the shasters positively recommend the crime, and promise Heaven to the self-murderer, provided he die in the Ganges. In some places of the Ganges, deemed peculiarly sacred and efficacious, infatuated devotees very frequently drown themselves. Ward i. cxx. cxxi.

The victims, who devote themselves to death in these forms, have an entire confidence, that they shall by this meritorious act of self-murder obtain a healthful body in the next birth. Ward iii. 337.

V. When a woman has been long married, and has no children, it is common for the man, or his wife, or both of them to make a vow to the goddess, Gunga, that, if she will bestow the blessing of children upon them, they will devote the first-born to her. If after this vow they have children, the eldest is nourished till a proper age, which may be three, four, or more years according to circumstances, when on a particular day, appointed for bathing in any holy part of the river, they take the child with them, and offer it to this goddess. The child is encouraged to go farther and farther into the water, till it is carried away by the stream, or is pushed off by its inhuman parents. Ward iii. 338.

P. 87. *It is the secret of the British empire in India.*

In illustration of this statement I quote a passage from Capt. Basil Hall's Fragments of Voyages and Travels.

I remember once hearing a learned native of Hindostan remark, that, if any two of his countrymen, not to say two states, could be found, who at all times and under all circumstances might entirely depend upon each other, the British power in India would soon be at an end. On being pressed

to expand his enigma a little further he said—'The essential 'difference between you, English, and us, natives, consists 'chiefly in this particular, that, while all of you have implicit 'confidence in one another, and can reckon upon every one 'of your respective movements being regulated by the strictest 'maxims of good faith, we, alas! possess no such bond of 'union, as a rule of our lives. You act over the whole of 'this vast empire, as it appears to me, permanently from a 'sense of duty, not merely, because it seems to be your in-'terest at the moment, but on principle, and simply, because 'it is right. We too' (said he) 'certainly act in the main 'honestly But we do so, because we have learned, that such 'a course is for our advantage. We have our proverb as well 'as you about honesty and policy, which (we say) are twins, 'that are born, live, and die together. But unfortunately for 'us, Asiatics, whenever the temptation to err happens to be 'pretty strong, the unsubstantial nature of our motives be-'comes apparent; and straightway the whole of our moral 'structure falls to pieces from the want of the cementing 'principle of good faith, by which your conduct is regulated. 'The enormous superiority of physical force on the side of 'the natives sinks absolutely into nothing, when opposed to 'this moral strength, which you bring into the field, and may 'continue to exert as long as you please. It unites all of 'you in body and soul indissolubly, while it imparts to the 'whole of your numbers collectively the same decision of 'purpose and uniformity of action, which belong amongst us 'only to rare individuals. The spirit of truth and the re-'finements of the point of honour, which you cherish on their 'own account, seem to pervade all your classes alike: and thus 'your leaders are enabled to communicate the impulses of

'their master-minds to the youngest as well as to the oldest 'and most experienced man amongst you, and with equal 'facility and confidence at a distance as when close at hand. 'With us it is totally different. Our military leaders do in-'deed often exercise a wonderful sway over the minds of 'those soldiers, who are immediately under their eye; and 'they can put large bodies in motion with considerable effect. 'But none of these men are to be trusted at a distance: for, 'as I said before, we are altogether without that confident 'power, by which the English not only convey their wishes 'to one another, but at the same time secure the most hearty 'cooperation through good report and evil report, in disaster 'as well as in success, in danger, in difficulty, in temptation. 'The only question with you appears to be—"What is our 'duty?"—; and, that once ascertained, the point is pursued at 'all hazards, be the personal consequences what they may. If 'an Englishman at Delhi engages to meet another from cape 'Comorin on such a day on the banks of the Kistna, the 'promise is sure to be kept, whatever intervening circum-'stances arise, to render it the apparent interest of either or 'both to depart from the engagement.' Basil Hall's Frag-ments of Voyages and Travels. Vol. i. pp. 21—24.

To the above testimony of a native concerning India may be added the following observation, relative to the temporary occupation of Chusan by the British forces after the late war with China.

The spectacle of a government, superior to bribes and extor-tions, has been exhibited to their view. That moral power, which British truth and integrity have acquired in India, more than all our force of arms could alone effect, has here been es-tablished in the native mind. Smith's Narrative, p. 276.

Pp. 87, 88. *It is also the source of that moral superiority, 'which has at different times been observed in the protestant 'states on the continent of Europe, and even in the protestant 'cantons of Switzerland.'*

One of the latest testimonies to the truth of this statement, in regard to the cantons of Switzerland is that borne by Mr. Seymour in his Pilgrimage to Rome.

'The fact must be freely acknowledged by all candid tra-'vellers, that those cantons, which are protestant, are incom-'parably more comfortable, independent, wealthy, and pros-'perous than those, which are Roman catholic. They are 'incomparably more advanced in all, that constitutes modern 'civilization. I have visited almost every canton; and I am 'bound in all honesty and candour, and in despite of every 'charge of narrow-mindedness, or bigotry, or prejudice, to 'give my testimony to the fact, that in all the comfort, the 'industry, the independence, and the education, which consti-'tute modern civilization, the cantons, which are protestant, 'are far in advance of those, that are Roman catholic.' Seymour's Pilgrimage to Rome. Pp. 22.

But other travellers extend the remark further, as—

'Voluptuousness, impurity, dishonesty, cunning, hypocrisy, 'every vice prevails, and is connived at, just as popery has 'the more complete sway.' Wilson's Letters from an absent brother. Vol. ii. P. 312.

And an historian adds still more generally—

'One of the few circumstances in the history of the 'Roman catholic church, which has escaped all controversy, is 'that of its demoralization.' Waddington's History of the Church. Chap. xxviii. Sect. ii. 2.

P. 88. *The honour, which has frequently been bestowed on the serpent.*

It may seem extraordinary, that the worship of the serpent should have ever been introduced into the world; and it must appear still more remarkable, that it should almost universally have prevailed. As mankind are said to have been ruined through the influence of this being, we could little expect, that it would of all other objects have been adopted, as the most sacred and salutary symbol, and rendered the chief object of adoration. Yet so we find it to have been. Bryant's new System. Vol. i. P. 473, 474.

What is scarce credible, it obtained among christians; and one of the most early heresies in the church was of this sort, introduced by a sect, called by Epiphanius Ophitæ, and by Clemens of Alexandria Ophiani. P. 489.

P. 88. *The disposition in many nations to invest the object of worship with terror, and to regard him rather, as the author of evil, than of good, and thence rather to propitiate his anger than to solicit his favour.*

The Hottentots have the worship of an evil deity, whom they look upon, as the father of mischief, and the source of all their plagues. It is he (say they), who teaches the wicked Hottentots the cursed art of witchcraft, by which (they believe) innumerable mischiefs are done to the persons and cattle of the good. They therefore coax him upon any apprehension of danger or misfortune with the offering of an ox, or a sheep, and at other times perform divers ceremonies of worship, to wheedle and keep him quiet. Kolben's present state of the Cape of Good Hope, done into English by Mr. Medley, 1738. Vol. i. Chap. 8. Pp. 104, 105.

Each country hath several spirits or devils, that are peculiar to those places, and do domineer over them, under whose subjection the people do acknowledge themselves to be: and indeed it is sad to consider, how this poor people are subjected to the devil; and they themselves acknowledge it to be their misery, saying their country is so full of devils and evil spirits, that, unless they should adore them, they would be destroyed by them. Knox's historical relation of the island of Ceylon, 1681. Part iii. Chap. 3. p. 77.

I have never yet heard of a benevolent being in the worship, as practised in Ceylon. They are all evil, exercising a most wicked and malicious influence over the affairs of men: and on this account the natives are in continual fear of them. Children at the hour of their birth are generally dedicated to some one of these evil beings; and it is an awful fact, that in hundreds and thousands of instances the poor deluded people are so anxious to place themselves and all connected with them under the care and protection of the devil, that their children are solemnly dedicated to him, before they are born. Report of a missionary from Ceylon, printed in the Christian Observer. Vol. 24. p. 187.

P. 96. *All the philosophy of Greece appears to have been engrafted upon discoveries, imported from Egypt and the east.*

The whole theology of Greece was derived from the east. Bryant's Dissertation upon the Helladian and other Grecian writers. P. 147.

Omnis auctoritas philosophiæ, ut ait Theophrastus, consistit in beata vita comparanda: quare hoc videndum est, possitne nobis hoc ratio philosophorum dare. Pollicetur certe: nisi enim id faceret, cur Plato Ægyptum peragravit, ut a

sacerdotibus barbaris numeros et cœlestia acciperet? Cur ipse Pythagoras et Ægyptum lustravit, et Persarum magos adiit? Cicero de Finibus, lib. v. 86, 87.

P. 97. *They either disguised them in fiction, or reserved them for the ear of a chosen few after a period of probation, or divided their whole scheme of doctrine into esoteric and exoteric.*

It is said both of Pythagoras and Solon, that they resided for some time in Egypt, where the former was instructed by a sonchen, or priest of the sun: and as their theology was before very obscure, he drew over it a mysterious veil, to make it ten-fold darker. Bryant's Dissertation. P. 147.

Οὗτος τοὺς μαθητὰς διεῖλε, καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐσωτερικοὺς, τοὺς δὲ ἐξωτερικους ἐκαλεσεν· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ τὰ τελεώτερα μαθήματα ἐπιστευε, τοῖς δὲ τὰ μετριώτερα. Ἔθος δὲ τοῦτο ἦν παρ' αὐτῳ, ἐπειδαν προσηει τις, μαθητευσόμενος, πιπράσκειν τὰ ὑπάρχοντα, καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον κατατιθέναι, ἐσφραγισμενον, παρὰ τῷ Πυθαγόρῃ, καὶ ὑπέμενε σιωπῶν, ὅτε μὲν ἔτη τρία, ὅτε δὲ πέντε, καὶ μανθάνειν. Λύθις δὲ λυθεὶς, ἐμίσγετο τοῖς ἑτεροις, καὶ παρέμενε μαθητὴς, καὶ συνεισθιᾶτο ἅμα· εἰ δ' οὐ, ἀπελάμβανε τὸ ἴδιον, καὶ ἀπεβάλλετο. Ἠξίωσε τὰ πρῶτα σιγᾳν τοὺς μαθητὰς. Εἶτα, ἐπειδὰν αὐτοις ἱκανῶς παιδείας τῆς τῶν λόγων δόξῃ μετεῖναι, καὶ δυνατὸς περὶ ἄστρων καὶ φύσεως φιλοσοφήσωσι, καθαροὺς κρίνας, τότ' εκελεύε φθέγγεσθαι. Origen. i.2.

P. 97. *The same explanation is probably to be given of the original institution of those mysteries of Ceres, which were taught under the most solemn injunctions of secrecy.*

These also appear to have been originally transplanted from Egypt. Diodorus attributes this importation to Erechtheus, who brought a supply of corn to Athens in a famine: ‘τοῦτον

'δὲ, παραλαβόντα τὴν ἡγεμονίαν, καταδεῖξαι τὰς τελετὰς τῆς Δήμη-
'τρος ἐν Ἐλευσῖνι, καὶ τὰ μυστήρια ποιῆσαι, μετενεγκόντα τὸ
'περὶ τουτων νόμιμον ἐξ Αἰγυπτου.' Lib. i. Sect. 1. p. 19.

Concerning these mysteries Cicero says—'Mihi quum 'multa eximia divinaque videntur Athenæ peperisse, atque in 'vitam hominum attulisse, tum nihil melius illis mysteriis, 'quibus ex agresti immanique vita exculti ad humanitatem et 'mitigati sumus; initiaque ut appellantur, ita revera principia 'vitæ cognovimus, neque solum cum lætitia vivendi rationem 'accepimus, sed etiam cum spe meliore moriendi.' Cic. de Leg. l. ii. 35.

If this be a true description of the character of those mysteries in their original design and tendency, what motive can be conceived for the profound secrecy, with which they were celebrated, unless it be the opposition between the doctrines, there taught, and the popular superstitions of the day, and the dread of personal consequences from propounding them openly to persons, who were not prepared to understand, or to receive them?

P. 98. *They introduced from the east the forgotten doctrine of the soul's immortality, and engrafted upon it the fable of transmigration.*

Other philosophers are said to have learned from Egypt the same truth; and thus the doctrine seems to have been often introduced, and as often forgotten. Thus Diogenes reports concerning Thales—'Ἐνιοι δὲ καὶ αὐτὸν πρῶτον εἰπεῖν φασιν ἀθανάτους τὰς ψυχάς.' L. i. cap. 3.—and yet Cicero says—'Pherecydes 'Syrius primum dixit, animos hominum esse sempiternos.' Cic. Tus. 2. i. 38.

Even the fable of transmigration was not altogether ori-

ginal with Pythagoras, having been imported together with his other doctrine from Egypt, and then modified according to his own fancy. But the new and precise form, which he gave to it, was his own invention.

Διὸ ἔλεγεν ἑαυτὸν πρὸ μὲν τῶν Τρωϊκῶν Θαλλίδην γεγονέναι, ἐν δὲ τοῖς Τρωϊκοις Εὔφορβον, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα Ἑρμοτιμον Σάμιον, μεθ' ὃν Πύῤῥον Δήλιον, πέμπτον Πυθάγοραν. Origen. i. 2.

P. 99. *They appear evidently to have sanctioned the plurality of gods, worshipped among their countrymen.*

The golden verses of Pythagoras, though not written by him, may be taken, as an exposition of the moral tenets of the Italic school; and they begin with these lines—

Ἀθανάτους μέν πρῶτα θεοὺς, νόμῳ ὡς διάκεινται,
Τίμα. καὶ σέβου Ὅρκον, ἔπειθ' ἥρωας ἀγαυούς,
Τούς τε καταχθονίους σέβε δαίμονας, ἔννομα ῥέζων.

So also Diogenes tells us, that Pythagoras taught, τιμὰς θεοῖς δεῖν νομίζειν, καὶ ἥρωσιν. L. viii. cap. 1. s. 19, 33.

P. 99. *The unity of the Godhead had become so obscured by the worship of false deities, that not one of the philosophers of the heathen can be said to have held it in its purity.*

It was one of the charges against Socrates, that he did not regard those, as Gods, who were worshipped in the city of Athens. But Xenophon defends him from this charge by pleading the notoriety of his idolatry. 'Θύων τε γὰρ φανερὸς 'ἦν, πολλακὶς μὲν οἴκοι, πολλακὶς δέ ἐπὶ τῶν κοίνων τῆς πολέως 'βώμων.'—Mem. i. 1; and Plato, as is well known, illustrates his sincerity in these acts by recording his last direction to his friend, Crito, to perform after his death the sacrifice of a cock, which he had previously vowed to Æsculapius.

P. 99. *Some indeed held him to be a being without beginning or end, a pure spirit, a subtle æther, a disposing mind, the former of the universe.*

Thus Diogenes Laertius attributes to Thales the apophthegm.—'Πρεσβύτατον τῶν ὄντων Θεός· ἀγέννητον γάρ· κάλλιστον κόσμος· 'ποίημα γὰρ Θεου.'—L. 1. Cap. 1. 9; and to Anaxagoras—'Πάντα χρήματα ἦν ὁμου. Εἶτα Νοῦς, ἐλθὼν, αὐτὰ διεκόσμησε.' L. ii. Cap. 3. 1. The following are supplied by Cicero. 'Anaximenes aera Deum statuit.' De Nat. D. l. 26. 'Speu-'sippus, vim quandam dicens, qua omnia regantur, eamque 'animalem; Aristoteles cœli ardorem Deum dicit esse. 32, 33. 'Cleanthes ultimum, et altissimum, atque undique circum-'fusum, et extremum, omnia cingentem atque complexum, 'ardorem, qui æther nominetur, certissimum Deum judicat;' 37. 'Ennius hoc sublime candens, quem invocant omnes 'Jovem.' ii. 4.—: and again in the Tusculan questions—

'Si Deus aut anima, aut ignis est.' Tusc. Qu. i. 65.

These descriptions indeed are quite inconsistent with the prevailing polytheism, and shew the difficulties, to which the philosophers were reduced in attempting to reconcile their theoretical notions with the sentiments, then universal among their countrymen.

P. 99. *They believed matter, or the material, from which the universe is formed, to be eternal, and to be a perpetual impediment to his operations.*

This is distinctly taught in the Timæus of Plato, where the Deity, or former of the universe, is represented, as designing good to the utmost of his power, and with that view operating upon a previously existing mass of matter, which he found in confusion, and which he reduced into order.

Βουληθεὶς γὰρ, ὁ Θεὸς, ἀγαθὰ μὲν πάντα, φλαῦρον δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι κατὰ δύναμιν, οὕτω δὴ πᾶν, ὅσον ἦν ὁρατὸν, παραλαβὼν, οὐχ ἡσυχίαν ἄγον, ἀλλὰ κινούμενον πλημμελῶς καὶ ἀτάκτως, εἰς τάξιν αὐτὸ ἤγαγεν ἐκ τῆς ἀταξίας.—

And again—

Ταῦτα δὴ πάντα τότε, ταύτῃ πεφυκότα ἐξ ἀνάγκης, ὁ τοῦ καλλίστου τε καὶ ἀρίστου δημιουργὸς ἐν τοῖς γιγνομένοις παρελάμβανεν, ἡνίκα τὸν αὐτάρκη τε καὶ τὸν τελεώτατον θεὸν ἐγέννα, χρώμενος μὲν ταῖς περὶ ταῦτα αἰτίαις ὑπηρετούσαις, τὸ δὲ εὖ τεκταινόμενος ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς γιγνομένοις αὐτὸς· διὸ δὴ χρὴ δύ' αἰτίας εἴδη διορίζεσθαι, τὸ μὲν ἀναγκαῖον, τὸ δὲ θεῖον.

Pp. 99, 100. *Others again taught the mystical doctrine, which is still perpetuated in the Brahminical superstition of India, that God is himself the universe, pervading it, as the mind animates the body, so, that every particle of matter is not so much the creature of God as a part of his substance.*

Mundum, et hoc, quod nomine alio cœlum appellare libuit, cujus circumflexu teguntur cuncta, numen esse credi par est, æternum, immensum, neque genitum, neque interiturum unquam. Plin. Hist. Nat. l. ii. c. 1.

Principio cœlum, ac terras, camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum lunæ, Titaniaque astra
Spiritus intus alit, totamque, infusa per artus,
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.

Virg. Æn. vi. 724—727.

A brahmin commenced a long oration, the substance of which was to shew, that as every thing had proceeded from God, so every thing must finally return to, and be absorbed in him. Missionary Reg. 1835. p. 205.

Absorption into the divine essence is a doctrine, common (I

believe) to Plato and the Brahmins, and probably borrowed from the magi. Asiatic Researches. Vol. vi. p. 180.

P. 100. *Plato amidst much metaphysical speculation and much conjectural dogmatism has frequent flashes of a fine conception concerning Deity.*

Besides speculating on the nature and origin of soul, and various other questions of a metaphysical nature, which are proper subjects of investigation, Plato pronounces dogmatically upon the succession of the gods, and the laws, affecting the transmigration of souls. Of the extent, to which he carries his disposition to speak with precision on things beyond the boundaries of human knowledge the following is a specimen. Having given a fanciful description of the original formation of human souls, each of which has its appropriate star, he proceeds to shew how it will fare with them according to their respective merits: '*καὶ ὁ μεν εὐ τὸν προσηκόντα χρονον βιους,*' (such is the direction of the forming God) '*παλιν εἰς τὴν τοῦ ξυννόμου πορευθεὶς οἴκησιν ἄστρου, βίον εὐδαίμονα καὶ συνήθη ἕξοι· σφαλεὶς δὲ τούτων, εἰς γυναῖκος φύσιν ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ γενέσει μεταβαλοι· μη παυόμενος τε ἐν τούτοις ἔτι κακίας, τροπον ὅν κακύνοιτο, κατὰ τὴν ὁμοίοτητα τῆς τοῦ τρόπου γενέσεως εἰς τινα τοιαύτην ἀεὶ μιταβαλοι θήρειον φύσιν.*' Plato Tim. and again in the Phædrus he says—'*Ος μὲν ἀν δικαίως διαγάγῃ, ἀμεινονος μοίρας μεταλαμβάνει, ὃς δ' ἂν ἀδίκως, χείρονος· εἰς μὲν γὰρ τὸ αὐτὸ, ὅθεν ἥκει ἡ ψυχὴ ἑκαστη, οὐκ ἀφικνεῖται ἐτῶν μυρίων· οὐ γὰρ πτεροῦται πρὸ τοσούτου χρόνου, πλὴν ἡ τοῦ φιλοσοφήσαντος ἀδολως, ἢ παιδεραστήσαντος μετὰ φιλοσοφίας. Αὖται δὲ τρίτῃ περίοδῳ τῇ χιλιετεῖ, ἐαν ἕλωνται τρὶς ἐφεξῆς τὸν βίον τοῦτον, οὕτω πλερωθεῖσαι, τρισχιλιοστῷ ἔτει ἀπέρχονται. Αἱ δὲ ἄλλαι, ὅταν τὸν πρῶτον βίον τελευτήσωσι, κρίσεως ἔτυχον· κριθεῖσαι δὲ,*

'αἱ μὲν, εἰς τὰ ὑπὸ γῆς δικαιωτήρια ἐλθοῦσαι, δικην ἐκτινουσιν, αἱ δ' 'εἰς τοὐρανοῦ τινὰ τόπον ὑπὸ τῆς δίκης κουφισθεῖσαι, διάγουσιν 'ἀξίως οὗ ἐν ἀνθρώπου εἴδει ἐβίωσαν βίου. Τῷ δὲ χιλιοστῳ 'ἀμφοτεραι, ἀφικνούμεναι ἐπὶ κλήρωσίν τε καὶ αἵρεσιν τοῦ δευτέρου 'βίου, αἱροῦνται, ὃν ἄν ἐθέλῃ ἑκάστη. Ἔνθα καὶ εἰς θηρίου βιον 'ἀνθρωπίνη ψυχὴ ἀφικνεῖται, καὶ ἐκ θηρίου, ὅς ποτε ἄνθρωπος ἦν, 'πάλιν εἰς ἄνθρωπον· οὐ γὰρ ἥ γε μήποτε ἰδοῦσα τὴν ἀλήθειαν εἰς 'τόδε ἥξει τὸ σχῆμα.'

These and other unsubstantial speculations he pursues into particulars, as if he were describing realities, and not imaginations; and it is in the midst of these, that there often occur scintillations, as it were, of a nobler conception concerning the nature and attributes of the Deity, and of the worship, due to him, as for instance—

'Λέγωμεν δὴ, δι' ἥν τινα αἰτίαν γένεσιν καὶ τὸ πᾶν τόδε ὁ 'ξυνιστὰς ξυνέστησεν. Ἀγαθὸς ἦν· ἀγαθῷ δὲ οὐδεὶς περὶ οὐδενὸς 'οὐδέποτε ἐγγίγνεται φθονος.' Plat. Tim.

Yet perhaps the most magnificent description of the attributes of Deity to be found in heathen writings, if the unity of the Godhead, which might seem to be implied in it, were not denied in all the surrounding context, is that attributed to Socrates by Xenophon. 'Γνώσῃ τὸ θεῖον, ὅτι τοσούτον καὶ 'τοιοῦτόν ἐστὶν, ὥσθ' ἅμα πάντα ὁρᾶν, καὶ πάντα ἀκούειν, καὶ παν-'τάχου παρεῖναι, καὶ ἅμα πάντων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι.' Ἀπομνημ. c. 4.

P. 100. *Plato invents a theogony of his own creation, and ascribes the government of the world rather to the agency of intermediate dæmons than to the sole authority of one all-seeing and all-pervading God.*

Thus, having attributed the production of the world to the goodness of the Deity, he intimates, that this supreme arti-

ficer was not able to accomplish all the good, that he designed. He therefore represents him, as beginning by a tentative process in the formation of the world to create first one nature, then another, observing, before he advanced to a second operation, the effect of the first, and then, when he had finished the work according to his own idea, delegating the management of the universe, which he had fabricated, to other inferior deities, that he might retire, as it would appear, into the solitude, in which he had dwelt before : καὶ ὁ μὲν δὴ, ἅπαντα ταῦτα διατάξας, ἐμενεν ἐν τῷ ἑαύτου κατὰ τρόπον ἤθει. Plat. Tim. The arrangement of his subordinate deities is, as follows, first Heaven and Earth : from them descend Ocean and Tethys, from them again Phorcys, Saturn, and Rhea, and in the fourth degree Jupiter, Juno, and all that later family of gods. These indeed are no other than the fabulous gods of Hesiod and Homer. The novelty consists in setting a supreme originator over them, and yet leaving to these inferior divinities the management of the world.

P. 100. *The supreme being, however described, was left by the ancient philosophers on a solitary throne, unencumbered with the cares, and unconcerned about the proceedings of the world.*

It is difficult to make any statement upon these matters, which insulated passages might not be brought to disprove. The quotation, just made from Xenophon, is opposed to it. Again Aristotle says in one place—' Εἰ τις ἐπιμέλεια τῶν ' ἀνθρωπίνων ὑπὸ θεῶν γίνεται, ὥσπερ δοκεῖ, καὶ εἴη ἂν εὔλογον ' χαίρειν τε αὐτοὺς τῷ ἀρίστῳ '—Nic. Eth. x. 8 ; which seems to imply an active superintendence of human affairs. Yet in the same chapter all practical interference on their part seems to be excluded, as unworthy of their superior nature : and there-

fore the regard for human virtue, here attributed to them, must be confined to complacency of observation, and not extended to active protection, ὥστε ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐνέργεια, μακαριότητι διαφέρουσα, θεωρητικὴ ἄν εἴη. So unwilling are the philosophers to disturb his equanimity with cares of government, and therefore provide him with an honorable retreat, otium cum dignitate, in which he may indulge those vast conceptions, which alone are supposed to be worthy of him. Yet there are passages, in which Aristotle, when arguing the necessity of a first cause, to account for the phænomena of nature, seems to speak of that first cause in terms, that differ from either of these representations, as if it were not the will of an intelligent being, but rather some immutable principle, having no other efficacy than that of setting the universe in motion. 'Εἴπερ οὖν ἀΐδιος 'ἡ κινήσις, ἀΐδιον καὶ τὸ κινοῦν ἔσται πρῶτον, εἰ ἕν, εἰ δὲ πλείω, 'πλείω τὰ ἀΐδια. Ἓν δὲ μᾶλλον ἢ πόλλὰ, καὶ πεπερασμένα ἢ 'ἀπείρα δεῖ νομίζειν. Ἱκανον δὲ, καὶ εἰ ἓν, ὃ, πρῶτον τῶν ἀκινήτων, 'ἀΐδιον ὂν, ἔσται τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀρχὴ κινησέως.' Arist. Phys. ii. 6, 4.

P. 101. *The very tenet of the soul's immortality, notwithstanding the pretension of Plato to demonstrate it by an argument, which will equally prove its eternity, was doubted, or disbelieved.*

The argument of Plato is clearly, that the soul is self-moved, or without external impulse, and that whatever is self-moved, can have neither beginning, nor end. 'Ἀθανάτου δὲ 'πεφασμένου τοῦ ὑφ' ἑαυτοῦ κινουμένου, ψυχῆς οὐσίαν τε καὶ λόγον 'τοῦτον αὐτον τις λέγων, οὐκ αἰσχυνεῖται· πᾶν γὰρ σῶμα, ᾧ μὲν 'ἔξωθεν τὸ κινεῖσθαι, ἄψυχον, ᾧ δὲ ἐνδοθεν αὐτῳ ἐξ αὐτοῦ, ἔμψυχον, 'ὡς ταύτης οὔσης φύσεως ψυχῆς. Εἰ δ' ἔστι τοῦτο οὕτως ἔχον, μὴ 'ἄλλο τι εἶναι τὸ αὐτὸ ἑαυτὸ κινοῦν ἢ ψυχήν, ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἀγένητον 'τε καὶ ἀθάνατον ψυχὴ αν εἴη.' Plat. Phædrus.

Another argument, which is attributed to Socrates in the Phædo, though said to be delivered under the solemn expectation of death, and on the very eve of his execution, is still less satisfactory, and even sophistical: for it is deduced from the use of language, and applied to the properties of things; for, because things, which are called by one name, must lose that name, when a contrary quality has been applied to them, as that, which is hot, cannot be called hot, when something cold has been added to it, or as an odd number cannot by addition be made even, (for then it would cease to be what it is), so the soul, which gives life to the body, cannot itself be held to be susceptible of death. After such an argument it can be no matter of surprise, if one of those, who listened to it, should still retain his scepticism. ‘ Ἀλλὰ μήν ’ (ἦ δ’ ὃς ὁ Σιμμίας) ‘ οὐδ’ αὐτὸς ἔχω ἔτι, ὅπῃ ἀπιστῶ ἔκ γε τῶν λεγομένων· ‘ ὑπὸ μέντοι τοῦ μεγέθους περὶ ὧν οἱ λόγοι εἰσί, καὶ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ‘ ἀσθένειαν ἀτιμάζων, ἀναγκάζομαι ἀπιστίαν ἔτι ἔχειν παρ’ ἐμαυτῷ ‘ περὶ τῶν εἰρημένων.’ Phædo, 56.

A simpler demonstration is offered by Cicero, that whatever possesses the powers, which we find to belong to the soul, as life, thought, and reason, is divine, and consequently eternal. ‘ Quicquid est illud, quod sentit, quod sapit, quod ‘ vivit, quod viget, cœleste et divinum est; ob eamque rem ‘ æternum sit, necesse est.’ Cic. Consol. and Tusc. Q. i. 66.

On the other hand, if the expectation of immortality is to rest upon the eternal pre-existence of the human soul, Cicero has in another passage of the same book stated the converse of that proposition in terms, which are at least equally natural and reasonable. ‘ Natura vero sic se habet, ut quo ‘ modo initium nobis rerum omnium ortus noster afferat, sic ‘ exitum mors. Ut nihil pertinuit ad nos ante ortum, sic ‘ nihil post mortem pertinebit.’ Tusc. Q. i. 91.

There is another argument for the immortality of the soul on rational principles, advanced by Addison. 'Can we believe' (says he,) 'a thinking being, that is in a perpetual progress 'of improvements, and travelling on from perfection to perfec- 'tion, after having just looked abroad into the works of its 'creator, and made a few discoveries of his infinite goodness, 'wisdom, and power, must perish at her first setting out, and 'in the beginning of her inquiries? Would an infinitely wise 'being make such glorious creatures for so mean a purpose? 'Can he delight in the production of such abortive intelli- 'gences, such short-lived reasonable beings?' Spectator, 111.

This indeed is very nearly the same line of reasoning, which Cicero attributes to Cato, in his treatise on old age. 'Sic mihi persuasi, sic sentio, quum tanta celeritas animorum 'sit, tanta memoria præteritorum, futurorumque prudentia, 'tot artes, tantæ scientiæ, tot inventa, non posse eam naturam, 'quæ res eas contineat, esse mortalem. Nemo unquam mihi, 'Scipio, persuadebit, aut patrem tuum, Paullum, aut duos 'avos, Paullum et Africanum, aut Africani patrem, aut patruum, 'aut multos præstantes viros, quos enumerare non est necesse, 'tanta esse conatos, quæ ad posteritatis memoriam pertinerent, 'nisi animo cernerent, posteritatem ad se pertinere.' De Sen. 78, 82.

Few however will be satisfied with such assumptions and anticipations, when they lay claim to the character of proof. Accordingly the mass of mankind were not convinced by any such reasoning of the point intended to be established.

Of this Cicero himself has furnished a remarkable proof in his oration for Cluentius, where in arguing, that a man, who had been assassinated, had himself sustained no harm from the loss of life, he uses language, clearly founded on

the presumption, that his hearers were universally sceptical on the subject of future rewards and punishments. 'Quid 'tandem illi mali mors attulit? Nisi forte ineptiis ac fabulis 'ducimur, ut existimemus illum apud inferos impiorum sup- 'plicia perferre, ac plures illic offendisse inimicos quam hic 'reliquisse, a socrus, ab uxorum, a fratris, a liberum pœnis 'actum esse præcipitem in sceleratorum sedem atque regio- 'nem: quæ si falsa sunt, id, quod omnes intelligunt, quid ei 'tandem aliud mors eripuit præter sensum doloris?' Pro A. Cluentio. 171.

But we find Tacitus, even after, or in the time of the apostles, representing this tenet, as a peculiar dogma of the Jews. 'Animas prælio aut suppliciis peremptorum æternas 'putant.' Hist. v. 5.—: and even Seneca in his consolatory letter to Marcia says—'Mors omnium dolorum et solutio est 'et finis, ultra quam mala nostra non exeunt, quæ nos in 'illam tranquillitatem, in qua, ante quam nasceremur, jacui- 'mus, reponit.' Consol. ad Marciam, cap. 26. 19. Hence naturally arose the too common sentiment—

'Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
'Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
'Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari.'
Virg. Georg. ii. 490—492.

There are some splendid passages indeed, interspersed in the writings of the ancient philosophers, of a contrary tendency, as for example—

'Omnia tamen sunt faciliora quam peccati dolor, qui et 'maximus est, et æternus.' Cic. Ep. ad Atticum, xi. 15.

'Εἴπερ ἡ ψυχὴ ἀθάνατος, ἐπιμελείας δὴ δεῖται οὐχ ὑπὲρ τοῦ 'χρόνου τούτου μόνον, ἐν ᾧ καλοῦμεν τὸ ζῆν, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τοῦ παντός,

'καὶ ὁ κίνδυνος νῦν δὴ καὶ δόξειεν ἂν δεινὸς εἶναι, εἴ τις αὐτῆς ἀμελήσει.' Plat. Phædo. 57.

But the state even of their own minds upon the subject may be fairly gathered from that remark, which Cicero represents, as made to him by his hearer, in the Tusculan questions. 'Nescio quo modo, dum lego, assentior. Quum 'posui librum, et mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum cœpi 'cogitare, assensio omnis illa elabitur.' Tusc. Q. i. 25 : and again he introduces Cato in his old age, as giving, after all the glowing anticipations, quoted above, the amount of his own convictions in these words—'Si in hoc erro, quod animos 'hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro, nec mihi 'hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo. Sin, 'mortuus, ut quidam minuti philosophi censent, nihil sen-'tiam, non vereor, ne hunc errorem meum mortui philosophi 'irrideant.' De Sen. 86.

In fact, notwithstanding all the ingenious reasoning, which has been spent upon this question, the immortality of the soul is incapable of distinct proof, except from revelation : for, if it be allowed, that the human soul was created by the will of an omnipotent being, the same power, which created it out of nothing, can reduce it to nothing again ; and, although many presumptive arguments may be collected, to shew, what that will is, it is impossible, that it should be discovered, unless he himself has been pleased to reveal it.

P. 102. *Cicero has counted up a great variety of opinions on the chief good.*

After a detailed exposition of these differences, he reduces them to six, and then to three, as follows—

Sex igitur hæ sunt simplices de summa bonorum malorumque

sententiæ, duæ sine patrono, quatuor defensæ. Junctæ autem et duplices expositiones summi boni tres omnino fuerunt; nec vero plures, si penitus rerum naturam videas, esse potuerunt. Cic de Fin. v. 20.

P. 102. *One sentiment however was common to most of them, that all evil is a counteraction of the design of nature, and that consequently whatever is contrary to human happiness is unnatural.*

Ipsa naturæ ratio est lex divina et humana, cui parere qui velit, (omnes autem parebunt, qui secundum naturam volent vivere,) nunquam committet, ut alienum appetat, et id, quod alteri detraxerit, sibi assumat. Etenim multo magis est secundum naturam excelsitas animi et magnitudo, itemque comitas, justitia, liberalitas, quam voluptas, quam vita, quam divitiæ; quæ quidam contemnere et pro nihilo ducere, comparantem cum utilitate communi, magni animi et excelsi est; detrahere autem alteri sui commodi causa magis est contra naturam quam mors, quam dolor, quam cætera generis ejusdem. Cic de Off. iii. 23, 24.

Deinde qui alterum violat, ut ipse aliquid commodi consequatur, aut nihil se existimat contra naturam facere, aut magis fugiendam censet mortem, paupertatem, dolorem, amissionem etiam liberorum, propinquorum, amicorum, quam facere cuiquam injuriam. Si nihil existimat contra naturam fieri hominibus violandis, quid cum eo disseras, qui omnino hominem ex homine tollat? Sin fugiendum id quidem censet, sed et multo illa pejora, mortem, panpertatem, dolorem, errat in eo, quod ullum aut corporis aut fortunæ vitium animi vitiis gravius existimat. iii. 26.

Si hoc natura præscribit, ut homo homini, quicumque sit,

ob eam ipsam causam, quod is homo sit, consultum velit, necesse est secundum eandem naturam omnium utilitatem esse communem : quod si ita est, una continemur omnes et eadem lege naturæ ; idque ipsum si ita est, certe violare alterum lege naturæ prohibemur. Verum autem primum. Verum igitur et extremum. iii. 27.

P. 103. *Plato has introduced some particulars, which are not only visionary, but unnatural, and subversive of all true morality.*

In the dialogue on laws, the exposure of children under certain circumstances is directed ; and in the republic women were to be held in common, and the children consequently not to know their own parents, but to be regarded and educated, as the children of the state, whereby all the best affections of nature would be stifled and annihilated.

P. 104. *The excess, to which they carried this speculative principle, deprived it of all moral efficacy.*

Fuit enim quidam summo ingenio vir, Zeno, cujus inventorum æmuli stoici nominantur. Hujus sententiæ sunt et præcepta ejusmodi, sapientem gratia nunquam moveri, nunquam cujusdam delicto ignoscere ; neminem misericordem esse, nisi stultum et levem ; viri non esse neque exorari, neque placari ; solos sapientes esse, si distortissimi sint, formosos, si mendicissimi, divites, si servitutem serviant, reges. Cic. Or. pro Murena. 61.

The extravagance of these sentiments easily exposed them to ridicule.

> Ad summum sapiens uno minor est Jove, dives,
> Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum,
> Præcipue sanus, nisi quum pituita molesta est.
>
> Hor. Ep. i. 1. 106—108.

P. 105. *Their fundamental principle was, that human perfection consists in living according to nature.*

Butler defends this maxim in the first three of his fifteen sermons, preached at the Rolls chapel, which, as he himself states in a preface, 'were intended to explain what is meant 'by the nature of man, when it is said, that virtue consists in 'following, and vice in deviating from it, and by explaining to 'shew, that the assertion is true.' p. vii.

In order to illustrate this position, Butler observes, that 'it is from considering the relations, which the several appe-'tites and passions in the inward frame have to each other, 'and above all the supremacy of reflection or conscience, that 'we get the idea of the system or constitution of human 'nature.' p. x.

There seems reason to regret, that in thus treating of the proper nature of man the learned and excellent author has not adverted to the fact of the fall. He speaks of the system or constitution of human nature, as if it were one and unchanged, instead of having fearfully degenerated. It is the property of vines to produce grapes. But, if a thousand years ago some disease had befallen all the vines in the world, such as in one night a few years ago befel many of the planes in this country, and if the effect of that disease had been, that all the vines, then existing, and all, that have since been propagated from them, instead of grapes produced a poisonous berry, few persons would now say, that it is the nature of vines to produce grapes. So it must be admitted, that the nature of man has been changed by the fall, and must be changed again, before it can be what it ought.

It is true, that in speaking of man's constitution even now

we must take into our view, as Butler contends, the power and office of conscience. But what, if conscience itself be defiled? and saint John tells us, that the conscience of the unbelieving (that is of all unconverted men) is defiled. Will such a conscience lead to right action? No. Conscience itself must be purified, Heb. ix. 14., before it can discharge its proper duty.

Thus there is still wanting in the definition a distinction between human nature, as it was, and human nature, as it is. Accordingly, when Butler says, that 'man may act according 'to that principle or inclination, which for the present happens 'to be strongest, and yet act in a way disproportionate to, 'and violate his real proper nature,' Sermon ii. p. 37, it is evident, that his real proper nature, if rightly understood, is not such as that nature is now, but such as it was, before he fell. The doctrine of Butler indeed is, that a man acts according to his nature, not when he acts according to the dictates of blind, unreflecting passion, but when he follows each propension, which actuates him, only so far as that internal monitor, his conscience, will direct and approve: and undoubtedly, if conscience were enlightened, and the different principles and actuating motives of the mind were brought under subjection to it, this would be true. But this is to suppose a state of things, which has never existed since the fall: for neither has any man been found to act uniformly in conformity to what Butler calls the supremacy of conscience, nor consequently does conscience itself, being too much under the corrupting influence of unruly desire, though it retain power to reprove and correct, always teach rightly what is the duty of man. Saint Paul for instance thought with himself, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of

Jesus ; and many a man, acting under no other guidance, than that of his natural conscience, would see no evil in retaliation, or revenge, if confined within moderate limits ; nor indeed would conscience ever in our present lapsed condition, without instruction from the word and illumination from the grace of God, elevate our views to a true conception of the divine law, to love God with all our powers, and our neighbour, as ourselves. This then is his real, proper nature, when all his inclinations act in harmony, and when there is not only conscience to control them all, but the known and acknowledged law of God to enlighten the conscience : and such was the primitive condition of our nature, a condition, now unhappily changed, and not to be restored, till help is obtained from above, and divine grace, acting through faith in a redeemer, has anew directed all the dispositions of our nature into their right channel.

On the impracticability of making Conscience the supreme arbiter of human conduct the remarks of Dr. Whewell are decisive. ' If Conscience ' (says he) ' be the supreme judge ' of right and wrong, whose conscience is to be taken ? If ' that of the individual, what crimes have not been committed ' with a tranquil conscience, and even for conscience' sake ? ' If that of the human species, how is it to be found among ' the conflicting moral judgments of different persons, nations, ' and ages ? '—: and he then lays down this just position in conclusion. ' Conscience, though according to Butler she has ' a natural authority over Appetite, Desire, and Affection, ' has not a supreme authority, but is herself subject to the ' supreme rule, which injoins all virtue and duty, and which is ' in reality the law of God.' Whewell's Preface to Butler's three Sermons. pp. xiv—xvi.

P. 107. *Aristotle describes the condition of those, who have not yet attained the mastery over themselves.*

Arist. Nic. Eth. i. 13.

P. 107, 108. *The short answer, given by both these sects of philosophers, is—'By discipline and education.*

The works of Plato on the republic, and on laws, and the treatise of Aristotle on political science, are all written with this view, the general scheme of both philosophers being thus expressed by the latter in the last chapter of his ethics.

'Δεῖ δὴ τὸ ἦθος προϋπάρχειν πως οἰκεῖον τῆς ἀρετῆς, στέργον τὸ 'καλὸν, καὶ δυσχεραῖνον τὸ αἰσχρόν. Ἐκ νέου δὲ ἀγωγῆς ὀρθῆς 'τυχεῖν πρὸς ἀρετὴν χαλεπὸν, μὴ ὑπὸ τοιούτοις τραφέντα νόμοις· 'τὸ γὰρ σωφρόνως ζῆν καὶ καρτερικῶς οὐχ ἡδὺ τοῖς πολλοις, ἄλλως 'τε καὶ νέοις· διὸ νόμοις δεῖ τετάχθαι τὴν τροφὴν καὶ τὰ ἐπι-'τηδεύματα· οὐκ ἔσται γὰρ λυπηρὰ, συνήθη γενόμενα. Οὐχ 'ἱκανὸν δὲ ἴσως, νέους ὄντας, τροφῆς καὶ ἐπιμελείας τυχεῖν ὀρθῆς, 'ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ, καὶ ἀνδρωθέντας, δεῖ ἐπιτηδεύειν αὐτὰ, καὶ ἐθίζεσθαι, 'καὶ περὶ ταῦτα δεοίμεθ' ἂν νόμων, καὶ ὅλως δὴ περὶ πάντα τὸν 'βίον· οἱ γὰρ πολλοὶ ἀνάγκῃ μᾶλλον ἢ λόγῳ πειθαρχοῦσι, καὶ 'ζημίαις ἢ τῷ καλῷ· διόπερ οἴονται τινες, τοὺς νομοθετοῦντας δεῖν 'μ'ν παρακαλεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν, καὶ προτρέπεσθαι τοῦ καλοῦ 'χάριν, ὡς ὑπακουσομένων τῶν ἐπιεικῶν τοῖς ἔθεσι προηγουμένοις, 'ἀπειθοῦσι δὲ, καὶ ἀφυεστέροις οὖσι, κολάσεις τε καὶ τιμωρίας 'ἐπιτιθέναι, τοὺς δ' ἀνιάτους ὅλως ἐξορίζειν· τὸν μὲν γὰρ ἐπιεικῆ 'καὶ πρὸς τὸ καλὸν ζῶντα, τῷ λογῳ πειθαρχήσειν, τὸν δὲ φαῦλον, 'ἡδονῆς ὀρεγόμενον, λύπῃ κολάζεσθαι, ὥσπερ ὑποζύγιον· διὸ καὶ φασι 'δεῖν τὰς τοιαύτας γίνεσθαι λύπας, αἳ μάλιστα ἐναντιοῦνται ταῖς 'ἀγαπωμεναις ἡδοναις. Εἰ δ' οὖν, καθαπέρ εἴρηται, τὸν ἐσόμενον 'ἀγαθὸν τραφῆναι καλῶς δεῖ, καὶ ἐθισθῆναι, εἶθ' οὕτως ἐν ἐπιτη-

'δεύμασιν ἐπιεικέσί ζῆν, καὶ μήτε ἄκοντα, μήτε ἑκοντα, πράττειν
'τὰ φαῦλα, ταῦτα δὲ γίγνοιτ' ἂν βιουμένοις κατὰ τινὰ νοῦν καὶ
'τάξιν ὀρθὴν, ἔχουσαν ἰσχὺν, ἡ μὲν οὖν πατρικὴ πρόσταξις οὐκ ἔχει
'τὸ ἰσχυρὸν, οὐδὲ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον, οὐδὲ δὴ ὅλως ἡ ἑνὸς ἀνδρὸς, μὴ
'βασιλέως ὄντος, ἢ τινος τοιούτου, ὁ δὲ νόμος ἀναγκαστικὴν ἔχει
'δύναμιν, λόγος ὢν ἀπο τινος φρονήσεως καὶ νοῦ· καὶ τῶν μὲν
'ανθρώπων ἐχθραίνουσι τοῦς ἐναντιουμένους ταῖς ὁρμαις, κἂν ορθῶς
'αὐτὸ δρῶσιν, ὁ δὲ νόμος, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπαχθὴς, τάττων τὸ ἐπιεικές'—:
and, as a sequel to these remarks, he thus announces his intended political work.

'Παραλιπόντων οὖν προτερων ἀνερεύνητον τὸ περὶ τῆς νομοθεσίας,
'αὐτοὺς ἐπισκέψασθαι μᾶλλον βέλτιον ἴσως, καὶ ὅλως δὴ περὶ
'πολιτείας, ὅπως εἰς δύναμιν ἡ περὶ τὰ ανθρώπινα φιλοσοφία
'τελειωθῃ.' Arist. Nic. Eth. x. 9.

P. 108. *That all our efforts should be directed to the object of enabling men to feel pleasure and pain on the right occasions.*

This sentiment is propounded by Plato in the second book of his dialogue on laws, where he represents it, as the direct object of a good education to train the children of the state ὥστε μισεῖν μεν, ἃ χρὴ μισειν, εὐθὺς ἐξ ἀρχὴς μέχρι τέλοῦς, στέργειν δὲ, ἃ χρὴ στέργειν.—: and from him Aristotle quotes it, saying—'Δεῖ ἦχθαι πως εὐθὺς ἐκ νέων, ὡς ὁ Πλάτων φησὶν, ὥστε χαίρειν
'τε καὶ λυπεῖσθαι οἷς δεῖ.' Nic. Eth. ii. 3.—: and in another place he reiterates the same doctrine, saying—'Δοκεῖ δὲ καὶ
'πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ἤθους ἀρετὴν μέγιστον εἶναι τὸ χαίρειν οἷς δεῖ, καὶ
'μίσεῖν ἃ δεῖ· διατείνει γὰρ ταῦτα διὰ παντὸς τοῦ βίου.' Nic. Eth. x. 1.

This attempt to regulate the affections is one, that lies at the basis of all true morality, and even approaches towards the evangelical principle of making the tree good, that its

fruit may be good likewise. It occurs to me here to mention, that Dr. Whewell, in the masterly preface to his edition of Butler's three sermons, already referred to, has hardly done justice to Aristotle in saying, that he 'appears to make an 'external end the sovereign guide of action,' Preface, p. xxxv; for Aristotle's εὐδαιμονία, which we translate for want of a more exact word happiness, is an ἐνέργεια ψυχῆς.

P. 109. *That we should then strive to give a new elevation to our nature.*

Δίκαια γὰρ καὶ ἀνδρεῖα καὶ τὰ ἄλλα τὰ κατὰ τὰς ἀρετὰς πρὸς ἀλλήλους πράττομεν ἐν συναλλάγμασι καὶ χρείαις καὶ πράξεσι παντοίαις, ἔν τε τοῖς πάθεσι τὸ πρέπον ἑκάστῳ διατηροῦντες. Ταῦτα δ' εἶναι φαίνεται πάντα ἀνθρωπικα. Arist. Nic. Eth. x. 8.

Χρὴ δὲ οὐ κατὰ τοὺς παραινοῦντας ἀνθρώπινα φρονεῖν, ἄνθρωπον ὄντα, οὐδὲ θνητὰ τὸν θνητόν, ἀλλ' ἐφ' ὅσον ἐνδέχεται ἀπαθανατίζειν, καὶ ἅπαντα ποιεῖν πρὸς τὸ ζῆν κατὰ τὸ κράτιστον τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ. x. 7.

P. 109. *Epicurus taught, that nature points to enjoyment, as the height of perfection.*

This is a doctrine, which almost necessarily follows from a rejection of all accountableness to a supreme being, and a confinement of human interests to the present scene. If in such circumstances human life be destitute of enjoyment, there is nothing to make compensation for the loss. Yet even then the enjoyment of life will not be found in intemperance: and accordingly Epicurus taught his followers to look for it in a sober use of the means within their reach, and a cultivation of those mental resources, which minister to the highest enjoyment.

In the account, given of him by Diogenes, his disciple, he speaks of τὰ περὶ θεῶν οσια, piety to the gods, much in the style of compliance with popular superstition, which was common with the philosophers, and says—' Κρεῖττον ἦν τῷ ' περὶ θεῶν μύθῳ κατακολουθεῖν, ἢ τῇ τῶν φυσικῶν εἱμαρμενῃ ' δουλεύειν.' x. 27, 133, 134.

His principal tenet is thus explained :—' Τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀρχὴν ' καὶ τέλος λέγομεν εἶναι τοῦ μακαρίως ζῆν· ταύτην γὰρ ἀγαθὸν ' πρῶτον καὶ συγγενικὸν ἔγνωμεν, καὶ ἀπὸ ταύτης καταρχόμεθα ' πάσης αἱρεσεως καὶ φυγῆς, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτην καταντῶμεν, ὡς κανόνι, ' τῷ πάθει πᾶν ἀγαθὸν κρίνοντες· καὶ ἐπεὶ πρῶτον ἀγαθὸν τοῦτο ' καὶ σύμφυτον, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ οὐ πᾶσαν ἡδονὴν αἱρουμεθα, αλλ' ' ἐστιν ὅτε πολλὰς ἡδονὰς ὑπερβαίνομεν, ὅταν πλεῖον ἡμῖν τὸ δυσχερὲς ' ἐκ τούτων ἔπηται, καὶ πολλὰς ἀλγηδόνας ἡδονῶν κρείττους νομίζομεν, ' ἐπειδὰν μέιζων ἡμῖν ἡδονὴ παρακολουθῇ, πολὺν χρόνον ὑπομείνασι τὰς ' ἀλγηδόνας. Ὅταν οὖν λέγωμεν ἡδονὴν τέλος ὑπάρχειν, οὐ τὰς ' τῶν ἀσώτων ἡδονὰς καὶ τὰς τῶν ἐν ἀπολαύσει κείμενας λέγομεν, ' ὥς τινες, ἀγνοοῦντες, καὶ οὐχ ὁμολογοῦντες, ἢ κακῶς ἐκδεχό- ' μενοι νομιζουσιν, ἀλλὰ τὸ μήτε ἀλγεῖν κατα σῶμα, μήτε ' ταράττεσθαι κατὰ ψυχὴν σωνείροντες· συμπεφύκασι γὰρ αἱ ἀρεταὶ ' τῷ ζῆν ἡδέως, καὶ τὸ ζῆν ἡδέως τούτων ἐστὶν ἀχώριστον.' x. 27, 128—132.

P. 110. *He deduces from it lessons of self-denial and self-devotion for the general good, which are certainly above the level, not indeed of gospel-morality, but of the professed morality of many, who call themselves christians.*

I allude chiefly to the question, agitated in the third book of the offices, whether a person, entering a besieged city under the pressure of famine with a cargo of corn, is at liberty to conceal his knowledge of the fact, that other vessels are be-

hind, similarly freighted, and to take advantage of that ignorance, that he may raise the price of his goods ; and this question is after full discussion determined on the high principle, that we ought to consider what is for the public good, as superior to our private advantage ; ‘ ex quo intelligitur, ‘ quoniam juris natura fons sit, hoc secundum naturam esse, ‘ neminem id agere, ut ex alterius prædetur inscientia.’ Cic. de Off. iii. 72.

P. 111. *Except in some occasional sentiment, which breathes a moral grandeur above the tone of their practical system.*

‘ Terence is the man, who seems to have copied human nature ‘ with most exactness. Yet his citizen of universal benevolence, ‘ whom he draws with so much life in that masterly stroke —

“ Homo sum. Humani nihil a me alienum puto ”—,

‘ is the same person, who commands his wife to expose her ‘ newborn daughter, and falls into a passion with her for ‘ having committed that hard task to another, by which ‘ means the infant escaped death.’ Warburton’s divine Legation, Book 1. Sect. 4.

The following are specimens of a similar character, occurring either in argumentative writings, or in familiar correspondence.

‘ Illud effici, quod quibusdam incredibile videatur, sit autem ‘ necessarium, ut nihilo sese plus quam alterum diligat.’ Cic. de Leg. i. 34.

‘ Omnia tamen sunt faciliora quam peccati dolor, qui et ‘ maximus est, et æternus.’ Cic. Ep. ad Att. xi. 15.

‘ Animi labes nec diuturnitate evanescere, nec amnibus ‘ ullis elui potest.’ Cic. de Leg. ii. 24.

'Mea mihi conscientia pluris est quam omnium sermo.' Cic. Ep. ad Att. xii. 28.

P. 112. *The Brahminical notion, that the mind of man is a part of the deity, into which it is again absorbed after death.*

Their fundamental tenets are, that nothing exists absolutely, but God, that the human soul is an emanation from his essence, and, though divided for a time from its heavenly source, will be finally reunited with it, that the highest possible happiness will arise from its reunion, and that the chief good of mankind in this transitory world consists in as perfect an union with the eternal spirit as the encumbrances of a mortal frame will allow. Sir W. Jones's Disc. vi. 2.

By means of self-righteous asceticism they hope to be delivered from the grosser elements, which form the compound being, man, and to be assimilated to, and at length finally absorbed into the immaterial substance of the holy Buddh. This is the grand hope of Buddhism. This is the only stimulus to present exertion, which it offers. The material part of man is to be purged away; and after transmigration through certain stages of animal life, more or less numerous in proportion to the guilt or merit of the individual, the soul is at last taken into the deity, and becomes a part of Buddh himself. Smith's Narrative. ch. 13. p. 185.

P. 112. *The Persian magians, who worshipped the sun, as the purest emblem of Deity, yet regarded Light and Darkness, as two independent powers, contending for empire.*

Diogenes says of them, δύο κατ' αὐτοὺς εἶναι ἀρχὰς, ἀγαθὸν δαίμονα, καὶ κακὸν δαίμονα, καὶ τῷ μὲν ὄνομα εἶναι Ζεὺς καὶ Ὡρομασδης, τῷ δὲ Ἅιδης καὶ Ἀρειμάνιος. Diog. Procem. 6.

Their chief doctrine was, that there were two principles, one of which was the cause of all good, and the other the cause of all evil, (that is to say God, and the devil), that the former is represented by light, and the other by darkness, as their truest symbols, and that of the composition of these two all things in the world are made. The good God they name Yazdan, and also Ormuzd, and the evil God Ahraman. The former is by the Greeks called Oromasdes, and the latter Arimanius. Prideaux's Old and new Testament connected. Part 1. Book 3. Pp. 252, 253.

P. 113. *That the Deity is envious of human happiness, and that consequently he must be appeased by surrendering some portion of that happiness, to save the remainder.*

The story of Amasis in Herodotus will here occur to the reader, who advised Polycrates to throw away the most valuable of his possessions, in order to propitiate the envy of the Deity, who might otherwise be jealous of his uninterrupted prosperity; on receiving which advice Polycrates is said to have cast a seal, set with precious stones, an elegant work of art, on which he set a high value, into the sea.

P. 113. *They are gross idolaters.*

The Chinese know nothing of any spiritual substance, distinct from the material, such as God, angels, and the rational soul. Navarette's Account of the empire of China. 1704. B. 5.

In almost all Chinese towns there are shops for the sale of idols of all kinds and price, from a few cash to a very large sum. Fortune's Three years' wanderings. Ch. ix. p. 178.

We entered an idol shop, where idols of every pattern and quality were procurable, the price varying from several dollars

each to the low sum of six cash, equal to about one farthing. The licensed permission of the mandarins to pursue the vocation of idol-maker, was visibly depicted on a sign-board in the shop. On another board was a notice, that precious Buddhas were there manufactured, or repaired. A large number of idols of every shape and in every stage of manufacture were lying around. Another idol manufactory had the sign suspended over the door—' The golden Buddha shop.' These shops were to be seen at every quarter of a mile, and presented groups of images. Smith's Narrative. Ch. 26. pp. 393, 394.

P. 114. *It generates in all its adherents a contempt or hatred for all, who reject it, and a proud confidence in their own acceptance with the Deity on the mere ground of their being the family, for which Mahomet will make intercession.*

Who can doubt of this effect, when such passages are found in the koran itself as these, which follow?

' As to those, who fight in defence of God's true religion, ' God will not suffer their works to perish. He will guide ' them, and will dispose their heart aright; and he will lead ' them into Paradise.' Sale's Koran, Ch. 47. p. 410.

' God hath purchased of the true believers their souls and ' their substance, promising them the enjoyment of Paradise ' on condition, that they fight for the cause of God. Whether ' they slay, or be slain, the promise for the same is assuredly ' due by the law, and the gospel, and the koran.' Ch. 9. p. 164.

' How will it be with the unbelievers, when we shall bring a ' witness out of each nation against itself, and shall bring thee, ' O Mahomet, a witness against these people? In that day ' they, who have not believed, and have rebelled against the

'apostle of God, shall wish the earth was levelled with 'them.' Ch. 4. p. 66.

P. 115. *Its practical influence is destroyed by his mistaken notions of the character of God, whom he describes, as rather a contemplative and intellectual being, who sees and knows all things, and interferes with none, than as a moral governor, and a righteous judge.*

This is the more remarkable, since he seems in some passages to describe him, as upholding the universe by his divine power. Thus, when speaking of a state, which was too large for human management, he says—'Ὁ δὲ λίαν ὑπερβάλλων 'ἀριθμὸς οὐ δύναται μετέχειν τάξεως· θείας γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο δυνάμεως 'ἔργον, ἥτις καὶ τόδε συνέχει τὸ πᾶν.' Polit. vii. 4. Yet he elsewhere teaches, that the blessedness of the Deity consists in intellect, rather than in action: for after excluding all the actions, which are performed among men, as unsuitable to his divine perfection, he asks—'Τῷ δὴ ζῶντι, τοῦ πράττειν 'ἀφῃρημένῳ, ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον τοῦ ποιεῖν, τί λείπεται, πλὴν θεωρίας; 'ὥστε ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐνέργεια, μακαριότητι διαφέρουσα, θεωρητικὴ ἂν 'εἴη.' Nic. Eth. x. 8.

Pp. 119, 120. *The question, often agitated, was not simply, whether the soul of man be immortal, but also, whether it survive the body for a time, whether that be the case with the souls of all men, or only with those of the great and distinguished, and whether, if it continue to exist, it do not necessarily follow, that its condition must be improved after death.*

On the simple question of the immortality of the soul, as has been already shewn, the minds of the ancient philosophers were necessarily much at a loss.

This is the representation of the case by Cicero. ‘ Sunt, ‘ qui discessum animi a corpore putent esse mortem. Sunt, ‘ qui nullum censeant fieri discessum, sed una animum et ‘ corpus occidere, animumque cum corpore extingui. Qui ‘ discedere animum censent, alii statim dissipari, alii diu per- ‘ manere, alii semper. Harum sententiarum, quæ vera sit, ‘ Deus aliquis viderit! Quæ verisimillima, magna quæstio ‘ est.’ Cic. Tusc. Qu. i. 18, 23.

Then there were some, who thought, that immortality, or a continued existence of the soul for some time after death, was the privilege of a few. Tacitus for example introduces his fine apostrophe to Agricola, with this expression of doubt. ‘ Si, ut sapientibus placet, non cum corpore extinguuntur ‘ magnæ animæ.’ Tac. Agr. 46. Cicero also says of the stoics—‘ Stoici, diu mansuros aiunt animos, semper negant’—: and he thus reports the opinions of ancient philosophers, ‘ mortem non interitum esse, omnia tollentem atque delentem, ‘ sed quandam quasi migrationem commutationemque vitæ, ‘ quæ in claris viris et fœminis dux in cœlum soleret esse, in ‘ cæteris humi retineretur, et permaneret tamen.’ Tusc. Qu. i. 77, 27.

Those however, who held the immortality of the soul, held also, that, except in the case of the worst of men, its condition must be improved by death. Thus Cicero says again—‘ Mors ‘ aut meliorem, quam qui in vita, aut certe non deteriorem ‘ est allatura statum.’ Fragm. in Lact. iii. 19.—and again,— ‘ M. Dasne, aut manere animos post mortem, aut morte ‘ ipsa interire? A. Do vero. M. Quid, si maneant? A. ‘ Beatos esse concedo. M. Si intereant? A. Non esse misc- ‘ ros, quoniam ne sint quidem.’ Tusc. Qu. i. 25.—and lastly— ‘ Mors aut plane negligenda est, si omnino extinguit ani-

'mum, aut etiam optanda, si aliquo eum deducit, ubi sit 'futurus æternus. Atqui tertium certe nihil inveniri potest.' De. Senect. 66. 'Nam, si supremus ille dies non extinctio-'nem, sed commutationem affert loci, quid optabilius?' Tusc. Qu. i. 117.

So far indeed did the idea prevail, that death, if it be not an annihilation, must be an improvement of existence, that many were tempted by it even to the commission of suicide, as we are told in the following passage—

'A malis igitur mors abducit, non a bonis, verum si quæ-'rimus. Hoc quidem a Cyrenaico Hegesia sic copiose dispu-'tatur, ut is a rege, Ptolemæo, prohibitus esse dicatur illa in 'scholis dicere, quod multi, his auditis, mortem sibi ipsi con-'sciscerent.' Tusc. Qu. i. 83.

P. 120. *When the question was asked by any heathen philosopher—'What is the chief good, or what the happiness of man?'—the question was asked and answered with reference to the present life exclusively.*

Thus, even when the strongest statements were made, that virtue alone was to be desired for its own sake, the meaning was, that even in this life the dignity of our nature is best consulted by the promotion of virtue, and that the sufferings of a good man are compensated not by a future reward, but by the present consciousness of integrity.

P. 120. *Hence sprang the inquiry, so often made, and so variously determined, whether any man can be pronounced happy before his death.*

Aristotle has a whole chapter, filled with the perplexities, arising out of this question; and he at length determines it

thus. ‘ Τί οὖν κωλύει λέγειν εὐδαίμονα τὸν κατ᾽ ἀρετὴν τελείαν ‘ ἐνεργοῦντα, καὶ τοῖς ἐκτὸς ἀγαθοῖς ἱκανῶς κεχορηγημένον μὴ ‘ τὸν τυχόντα χρόνον, ἀλλὰ τέλειον βίον; ἢ προσθετέον, καὶ ‘ βιωσόμενον οὕτω, καὶ τελευτήσοντα κατὰ λόγον; ἐπειδὴ τὸ μέλ- ‘ λον ἀφανὲς ἡμῖν· τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν δὲ τέλος καὶ τέλειον τίθεμεν πάντῃ ‘ πάντως. Εἰ δ᾽ οὕτω, μακαρίους μὲν ἐροῦμεν τῶν ζώντων, οἷς ὑπάρχει ‘ καὶ ὑπάρξει τὰ λεχθέντα, μακαρίους δε, ὡς ἀνθρώπους.’ Arist. Nic. Eth. i. 10.

Solon on the other hand decides, that no one can be pronounced happy till the end of life, because until that hour his fortunes are incomplete. He even seems to make the happiness of man to consist in external prosperity: for he represents the happy man thus—‘ Ἄπειρος δὲ ἐστὶ, ἄνουσος, ἀπαθὴς ‘ κακων, εὔπαις, εὐειδής. Εἰ δὲ πρὸς τούτοισι ἔτι τελευτήσει τὸν ‘ βίον εὖ, οὗτος ὄλβιος κεκλήσθαι ἀξιός ἐστι· πρὶν δ᾽ ἂν τελευτήσῃ, ‘ ἐπισχεῖν, μηδὲ καλέειν κω ὄλβιον, ἀλλ᾽ εὐτυχέα.’ Herodot. Clio. 32.

Throughout all this discussion there is an absence of all reference to a future state, as an element in the constitution of human happiness.

P. 121. *The principles of human virtue were founded on a calculation of what is conducive to the welfare of society, to the present interests of the human race, and not to the will of the Deity.*

This is a code of morals, which has been adopted into the christian system by Paley, but with this important distinction, that, acknowledging the will of the Deity to be the foundation of human duty, he infers that will from the conduciveness of any action to the welfare of society.

Accordingly he lays down this position, as the foundation of

his whole system.—'The method of coming at the will of 'God concerning any action by the light of nature is to in-'quire into the tendency of the action to promote or diminish 'the general happiness. This rule proceeds upon the pre-'sumption, that God almighty wills and wishes the happiness 'of his creatures, and consequently, that those actions, which 'promote that will and wish, must be agreeable to him, and 'the contrary.' Paley's Principles of moral and political philosophy. Book ii. Ch. 4. p. 65.

Then with respect to what constitutes human happiness he says—'Any condition may be denominated happy, in which 'the amount or aggregate of pleasure exceeds that of pain; 'and the degree of happiness depends upon the quantity of this 'excess: and the greatest quantity of it, ordinarily attainable 'in human life, is what we mean by happiness, when we in-'quire or pronounce, what human happiness consists in.' Book i. Ch. 6. pp. 20, 21.

This indeed is proposed, as a method of coming at the will of God by the light of nature, which may possibly appear superfluous to those, who possess the light of revelation. But then Paley observes, that 'the scriptures commonly presup-'pose in the persons, to whom they speak, a knowledge of 'the principles of natural justice,' and therefore 'do not 'supersede the use of the science, of which we profess to 'treat.' Book i. Ch. iv. p. 8. He therefore tests scriptural injunctions by the same method: for he says—'The mis-'chief of drunkenness, from which we are to compute the 'guilt of it, consists in the following bad effects'—, Book iv. ch. 2. p. 7., as if the guilt of disobeying a divine command were not an evil in itself, but could be measured by the bad effects, which we perceive to flow from disobedience.

But an admirable confutation of the doctrine, that utility, or conduciveness to the temporal interests of mankind, is the measure of virtue, may be found in Butler's Dissertation on Virtue, recently republished by Dr. Whewell at the end of his three Sermons on human nature : nor need any thing be added to the force and beauty of his conclusion. ' The hap-
' piness of the world is the concern of him, who is the lord
' and the proprietor of it ; nor do we know what we are about,
' when we endeavor to promote the good of mankind in any
' ways, but those, which he has directed.' p. 67.

P. 121. '*We are not born*' (*says a heathen moralist*) '*for*
' *ourselves alone, but for our families, and for our country.*'
Cicero de Off. i. 22.

P. 151. *In how many instances has this unity been inculcated, as if it consisted merely in an external confederacy under one earthly head !*

The following is a description of church-unity by a bishop and vicar apostolic of the pope. ' This original and great
' church is, and ever has been one, first in her faith and terms
' of communion. The catholics, if properly interrogated, will
' confess their belief in one comprehensive article, namely this
' —" I believe whatever the holy catholic church believes,
' and teaches." Nor is it in her doctrine only, that the catho-
' lic church is one and the same. She is also uniform in what-
' ever is essential in her liturgy. Lastly a regular, uniform,
' ecclesiastical constitution and government, and a due subor-
' dination, are undeniably evident in the catholic church, and
' in her alone. Each single catholic in point of ecclesiastical
' œconomy is subject to his pastor, each pastor submits to

'his bishop, and each bishop acknowledges the supremacy 'of the successor of saint Peter.' Milner's End of religious controversy. L. 19. pp. 129—131.

P. 151. *How often have we known the mere act of baptism relied upon, as a sufficient test of discipleship, without due regard to that work of the holy spirit, which alone constitutes a true christian !*

The intricate questions, arising out of the practice of infant baptism, do not fall within the compass of the present inquiry ; which relates to the progressive work of sanctification, a work, of which unconscious infants are incapable, though, if their baptism is to avail them everlastingly, they must become the willing subjects of it in due time. It is the doctrine however of the Roman church, that the sacraments contain the grace, which they signify : and therefore it enacts—

'Siquis dixerit, per ipsa novæ legis sacramenta ex opere 'operato non conferri gratiam, anathema sit!' Concilii Tridentini canones et decreta. Sess. vii. De sacramentis. Can. 8.

P. 152. *Have we not known these gracious promises tied down to the literal and carnal expression of them ?*

'Semper hæc fides in ecclesia Dei fuit, statim post consecra-'tionem verum domini nostri corpus, verumque ejus sanguinem 'sub panis et vini specie una cum ipsius anima et divinitate 'existere, sed corpus quidem sub specie panis, et sanguinem 'sub vini specie.' Conc. Trid. Sess. xiii. De eucharistia. Cap. 3.

The profane use of this sacrament is indeed in some measure guarded against by a canon.

'Ne tantum sacramentum indigne, atque ideo in mortem et

'condemnationem sumatur, statuit atque declarat ipsa sancta 'synodus, illis, quos conscientia peccati mortalis gravat, quan- 'tumcunque etiam se contritos existiment, habita copia confes- 'soris, necessario præmittendam esse confessionem sacramen- 'talem.' Sess. xiii. De eucharistia. Can. 11.

Yet it will be seen, that this only relates to mortal sin, and the application of the pretended sacrament of penance, not to that habitual self-examination, which saint Paul represents, as the necessary and proper precursor to our eating of that bread and drinking of that cup.

P. 153. *How often do we find the mere succession from the apostles insisted on, as the single and sufficient evidence of an evangelical ministry !*

The catholic falls in with a number of very strong passages, in which our blessed saviour, not content with promising a continuance of his doctrines (that is to say the continued obligation of faith upon man), also pledges himself for their actual preservation among them. He selects a certain body of men. He invests them not merely with great authority, but with power, equal to his own. He makes them a promise of remaining with them, and teaching among them even to the end of time. This succession and body of persons, constituted to preserve those doctrines of faith, appointed, as the successors of the apostles, having the guarantee of Christ teaching among them for ever, is what he calls the church. From the moment he is satisfied, that Christ has appointed a succession of men, whose province it is by the aid of a supernatural assistance to preserve inviolable those doctrines, which Christ has delivered, from that moment whatever these men teach is invested with that divine authority, which he

had found in Christ through the evidence of his miracles. Wiseman's Third Lecture. Pp. 63, 64.

P. 155. *Another sacrifice has been instituted, and the ancient superseded institution revived, called the sacrifice of the mass.*

Fatemur, nullum aliud opus adeo sanctum ac divinum a Christi fidelibus tractari posse quam hoc ipsum tremendum mysterium, quo vivifica illa hostia, qua Deo patri reconciliati sumus, in altari per sacerdotes quotidie immolatur. Conc. Trid. Sess. xxii. De celebratione missæ Decretum.

P. 155. *The Platonic doctrine of purgatory, and the Brahminical system of penance have been introduced into the church.*

These are two methods of expiation for sin, to be undergone, one in this world, and one in another ; and, scripture being altogether silent about either of them, they are rightly traced to the original, here ascribed to them. 'There can be 'no doubt' (says bishop Kaye in his Ecclesiastical History of the second and third centuries, p. 348.,) 'that the notion 'of a purification, which is necessary to the soul, before it 'can be admitted to the happiness of Heaven, is of Platonic 'origin.' The only difference is, that the purgatory of Plato was to be undergone in a succession of penal transmigrations, till the offences, which caused them, should be obliterated, and the penance of the Brahmins is voluntary, whereas in the Romish church the purgatory is more terrible, and the penance is dictated by the priest. These fictions among a pagan community in the absence of better instruction might possibly have an useful tendency. But in the christian church they amount to a denial of the perfect atonement, which has been wrought once for all by our gracious redeemer on the cross.

P. 155, 156. *Nor have men been unwilling to elevate the christian priesthood into a character, with which the scriptures have not invested it.*

Sacrificium et sacerdotium ita Dei ordinatione conjuncta sunt, ut utrumque in omni lege extiterit. Quum igitur in novo testamento sanctum eucharistiæ sacrificium visibile ex Domini institutione catholica ecclesia acceperit, fateri etiam oportet, in ea novum esse visibile et externum sacerdotium. Conc. Trid. Sess. xxiii. De ordine Cap. 1.

This deviation from the sobriety of scriptural truth began early in the church ; and the frequent substitution of ἱέρευς for πρεσβυτέρος in the writings of the fathers is an indication of it. How striking is the contrast between saint Paul's description of the office and character of a bishop, from that of Chrysostom !

Εἴ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ. Δεῖ οὖν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεπίληπτον εἶναι, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα, νηφάλιον, σώφρονα, κόσμιον, φιλόξενον, διδακτικόν, μὴ πάροινον, μὴ πλήκτην, ἀλλ' ἐπιεικῆ, ἄμαχον, ἀφιλάργυρον, τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενον, τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος, μὴ νεόφυτον, ἵνα μὴ, τυφωθεὶς, εἰς κρίμα ἐμπέσῃ τοῦ διαβόλου. 1 Tim. iii. 1—6.

Ὅταν δὲ ἐκκλησίας προστῆναι δέῃ, καὶ ψυχῶν ἐπιμέλειαν πιστευθῆναι τοσούτων, πᾶσα μὲν ἡ γυναικεία φύσις παραχωρείτω τῷ μεγέθει τοῦ πραγμάτος, καὶ ἀνδρῶν δὲ τὸ πλεον· ἀγέσθωσαν δε εἰς μέσον οἱ πολλῷ τῷ μέτρῳ πλεονεκτοῦντες ἁπάντων, καὶ τοσοῦτον ὑψηλότεροι τῶν ἄλλων κατὰ τὴν τῆς ψοχῆς ὄντες ἀρετὴν, ὅσον τοῦ παντὸς ἔθνους Ἑβραίων κατὰ τὸ τοῦ σώματος μέγεθος ὁ Σαούλ, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ πολλῷ πλεον· μὴ γάρ μοι μόνον ὑπερωμίας ἐνταῦθα ζητείσθω μέτρον, ἀλλ, ὅση πρὸς τὰ ἄλογα τῶν λογικων ἀνθρώπων ἡ διαφορὰ, τοσοῦτον τοῦ ποιμένος καὶ τῶν ποιμαινομένων εττω τὸ μέσον, ἵνα μὴ καὶ πλέον τι εἴπω. Chrysost. περὶ ἱερωσυνῆς. lib. ii.

P. 156. *That tissue of fraud and delusion, which makes the intention of the priest of more value in the administration of a sacrament than the faith of the communicant.*

'Siquis dixerit, in ministris, dum sacramenta conficiunt et 'conferunt, non requiri intentionem saltem faciendi quod facit 'ecclesia, anathema sit!' Conc. Trid. Sess. vii. De sacramentis in genere. Can. 11. And the awful consequence, which results from it, is thus acknowledged by Bellarmine, where he says concerning every communicant—'Neque potest 'certus esse certitudine fidei, se percipere verum sacramentum, 'quum sacramentum sine intentione ministri non conficiatur, 'et intentionem alterius nemo videre possit.' Bellarm. Tertiæ controversiæ generalis controversia secunda. Lib. iii. Cap. 8.

P. 156, 157. *These exaggerated notions of the sanctity, adhering to a particular profession, or to particular places, and times, and forms, have led other persons by a natural recoil to explode all forms.*

The chief leaders among the puritans entertained a strong aversion to the vestments, worn by the English clergy in the celebration of divine worship. As these habits had been made use of in the times of popery, and seemed to renew the impressions, that had been made upon the people by the Romish priests, they appeared to the puritans in no other light than as the ensigns of Antichrist. Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. Cent. xvi. Sect. 3. Part 2. ch. 2, 18.

They found moreover much subject of affliction and complaint in the rites and ceremonies, that were imposed by the order of the queen and the authority of her council. Among these were the festivals or holidays, that were celebrated in

honour of the saints, the use of the sign of the cross, more especially in the sacrament of baptism, the nominating godfathers and godmothers, as sureties for the education of children, whose parents were still living, and the doctrine, relating to the validity of lay-baptism. With respect to set forms of prayer, although they did not go so far as to insist upon their being entirely abolished, yet they pleaded for a right to every minister of modifying, correcting, and using them in such a manner as might tend most to the advancement of true piety, and of addressing the Deity in such terms as were suggested by their inward feelings, instead of those, that were dictated by others. ch. 19.

P. 157. *To dissipate the substance of religion by diluting it into a mere moral system without an atonement, without a divine saviour, without a sanctifying spirit.*

Scarcely had that happy revolution in the state of religion taken place, when a set of men, fond of extremes, and consequently disposed to look upon, as erroneous, whatever had hitherto been taught and professed in the church of Rome, began to undermine the doctrine of Christ's divinity, and the other truths, that are connected with it, and proposed reducing the whole of religion to practical piety and virtue. John Campanus, a native of Juliers, disseminated at Wittemberg and other places various tenets of an heretical aspect, and taught among other things, that the Son was inferior to the Father, and that the holy Ghost was not the title of a divine person, but a denomination, used to denote the nature of the Father, and of the Son. A doctrine of a similar kind was propagated in the year 1530 in Switzerland, Augsburg, and among the Grisons by a person, whose name was Clau-

dius. Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. Cent. xvi. Sect. 3. Part 2. Ch. 4, 3.

P. 161. *We find frauds and falsehoods, if committed for pious ends, or holy purposes, to be not only tolerated, but defended by many of the early fathers.*

An elaborate defence of fraud, when used for a righteous purpose, is given by Chrysostom, to cover his own deceit towards Basil, which finishes thus.

Καὶ γὰρ ἀπατεὼν ἐκεῖνος ἂν εἴη καλεῖσθαι δίκαιος, ὁ τῷ πράγματι κεχρημένος ἀδίκως, οὐχ ὁ μεθ' ὑγιοῦς γνώμης τοῦτο ποιῶν· καὶ πολλάκις ἀπατῆσαι δέον, καὶ τὰ μέγιστα διὰ ταύτης ὠφελῆσαι τῆς τέχνης, ὁ δὲ ἐξ εὐθείας προσενεχθεὶς, κακὰ μεγέλα τον οὐκ ἀπατηθέντα εἰργάσατο. Chrysost. περὶ ἱερωσανῆς. l. i.

P. 161. *We too often find credit taken for pretended miracles, and currency given to some of those legends, connected with the relics of martyrs, which have since defaced the character of the church.*

I perceive in the language of the fathers, who lived in the middle and end of the second century, something, which betrays, if not a conviction, at least a suspicion, that the power of working miracles was withdrawn, combined with an anxiety to keep up a belief of its continuance in the church. They affirm in general terms, that miracles were performed, but rarely venture to produce an instance of a particular miracle. Those, who followed them, were less scrupulous, and proceeded to invent miracles, very different indeed in circumstances and character from the miracles of the gospel, yet readily believed by men, who were not disposed

nicely to examine into the evidence of facts, which they wished to be true. Kaye's Eccl. Hist. Pp. 100, 102.

P. 161. *The prayers of those, who had faced the danger of martyrdom, or devoted themselves to the seclusion of a hermitage, were thought of more efficacy than personal faith and repentance.*

The veneration, that was paid to both martyrs and confessors, became in process of time a support to superstition, an incentive to enthusiasm, and a source of innumerable evils and abuses. Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. Cent. 1. Part 1. Ch. 5. 10.

P. 161. *The superstitious merit also, which was attached to the act of baptism, led many who professed and called themselves christians, to defer it till the end of life.*

If indeed the bare act of baptism absolves the baptized person from the guilt of all past sin, original and actual, it is impossible to get rid of the consequence, that it is wise to defer that act as long as it can be forborne with prudence, a consequence, so contrary to the free command of the saviour to go and baptize all nations as to discredit the principle, which involves it.

P. 166. *It is the accredited doctrine of that church, that man may merit grace.*

Siquis dixerit, hominis justificati bona opera ita esse dona Dei, ut non sint etiam bona ipsius justificati merita, aut ipsum justificatum bonis operibus, quæ ab eo per Dei gratiam et Jesu Christi meritum, cujus vivum membrum est, fiunt, non vere mereri augmentum gratiæ, vitam æternam, et ipsius vitæ æternæ, si tamen in gratia decesserit, consecutionem, atque

etiam gloriæ augmentum, anathema sit ! Conc. Trid. Sess. vi. De Justificatione. Can. 32.

Pp. 166, 167. *That the earthly governors of the church have power to wield the prerogative of Heaven in the pardon of transgression.*

'Dominus noster, Jesus Christus, e terris ascensurus ad 'cœlos, sacerdotes, sui ipsius vicarios, reliquit, tanquam præ-'sides et judices, ad quos omnia mortalia crimina deferantur, 'in quæ Christi fideles ceciderint, quo pro potestate clavium 'remissionis aut retentionis peccatorum sententiam pronunti-'ent.' Conc. Trid. Sess. xiv. De pœnitentia. Cap. 5. 'In 'articulo mortis omnes sacerdotes quoslibet pœnitentes a qui-'busvis peccatis et censuris absolvere possunt.' Cap. 7.

Such is the claim, asserted by the council. The following is a recent exercise of it by the pope. 'Leo, episcopus, servus 'servorum Dei, universis Christi fidelibus, præsentes literas in-'specturis, salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. Potuimus 'nobis vobisque omnibus gratulari, advenisse annum benigni-'tatis Domini, annum magni jubilæi, quo infinitus ille thesaurus 'meritorum salvatoris nostri et sanctorum ejus, nostræ dispen-'sationi divina miseratione concreditus, per nostræ humilitatis 'ministerium iterum erat reserandus. Datum Romæ apud 'sanctum Petrum anno incarnationis dominicæ 1845, 8vo 'calendas Januari, pontificatus nostri tertio.'

P. 167. *That justification is not a boon, granted to a penitent sinner, but a benefit, to be earned by intrinsic holiness of life, or instead of that by conformity to the rules of the church.*

Justificatio ipsa non est sola peccatorum remissio, sed et sanctificatio et renovatio interioris hominis per voluntariam

susceptionem gratiæ et donorum, unde homo ex injusto fit justus, et ex inimico amicus, ut sit hæres secundum spem vitæ æternæ. Conc. Trid. Sess. De justificatione vi. Cap. 7.

P. 167. *Some even among ourselves have countenanced several of these errors.*

Their very first aggression must be upon that strange congeries of notions and practices, of which the Lutheran doctrine of justification is the origin and representative. Whether any heresy has ever infested the church, so hateful and unchristian as this doctrine, it is perhaps unnecessary to determine. None certainly has ever prevailed, so subtle, and extensively poisonous. British Critic. No. 64. p. 390.

After baptism there is no plenary pardon of sins in this life to the sinner, however penitent, such as in baptism was once vouchsafed to him. Granting, that a certain, fixed, temporal penalty attached to every act of sin, in such case it would be conceivable, that as the multitude of christians did not discharge their total debt in this life, so some extraordinary holy men might more than discharge it. Such are the prophets, apostles, martyrs, ascetics, and the like, who have committed few sins, and have undergone extreme labours and sufferings, voluntary or involuntary. This being supposed, the question rises, what becomes of the overplus: and then there seems a fitness, that what is not needed for themselves should avail for their brethren, who are still debtors. Tracts for the Times. No. 79.

Union of the whole church under one visible government is abstractedly the most perfect state. British Critic. No. 59. p. 2.

The power of making the body and blood of Christ is

vested in the successors of the apostles. Froude's Remains v. 1. p. 326.

There is both continually recurring sacrifice, and human priesthood under the gospel. British critic. No. 62. p. 277.

The mysterious virtue, the transforming, invigorating efficacy, which the natural elements acquire through the act of consecration. British critic. No 59, p. 39.

Is it not quite a conceivable hypothesis, to say the very least, that holy and mortified men, whose conversation was in Heaven, may have entertained feelings of devotion and love, exempli gratia towards the blessed virgin, which no human language can at all adequately express, and yet, that their feeling towards our lord should be altogether different in kind, and indefinitely stronger in degree? British Critic. No. 64. pp. 410, 411.

P. 178. *The readiness to substitute a correct apprehension of the doctrine of justification by faith for the actual life of a christian.*

Nothing can more painfully illustrate the difficulties, which our fallen nature encounters in the cultivation of a religious life, than the fact, that, while some persons are prevented from pursuing it by a want of knowledge, the very possession of that knowledge seems to be an impediment to others. As the Jew rested in the possession of the law without being led by it, so many christians, having discovered the way of life, are contented with that discovery, and pursue it no further. It is impossible to conceive a more painful contrast than that of the restless earnestness and laborious search, with which some persons, who are troubled in conscience, will devote their whole time and faculties and property to the discovery of the truth,

with the unconcern and apathy, which is too often manifested, where the truth has been long known and familiar. This is very much what the apostles complain of, when they so often press those, who have the light, to walk in it. Gal. v. 25. Eph. v. 8. 1 Thess. v. 5, 6. 1 John i. 6, 7; ii. 8—11. The change from darkness to light is so great, that those, who have reached it, are tempted to think, that no further danger is to be apprehended, although they ought to know, that the light is only given them, that by walking in it they may avoid the dangers, and attain the blessedness, which the light of truth discovers. The late Mr. Alexander Knox appears to have been so impressed with this distinction, that he insists on the necessity of two different classes of ministers, one to enlighten, another to establish, one to awaken, and another to guide, the two processes being alike necessary to the complete salvation of a sinner. Perhaps, perceiving the second process to be the most neglected, and yet the most essential to a converted man, he may have given a greater prominence to it in writings, intended chiefly for the use of persons, who possessed the light, and were desirous to walk in it, than he would have done in addressing the unconverted. But I cannot think him justly amenable to the censure, passed on him by Mr. Garbett, where he says—'The πνευματικὴ ὄρεξις is quite dormant, 'till awakened by grace. In the philosophical system of Mr. 'Alexander Knox that fine intellect assigned too prominent a 'place to the same faculty in the natural mind.' Bampton Lectures. Prel. L. 2. V. 1. Pp. 107, 108.; and again in reference to the sentiment, that the blood of Christ is his obedience, he says—'There is too great an approach to this 'mode of speaking, and apparently of thinking, in Mr. Alex-'ander Knox's works.' P. 114.

The point, which Knox has labored with so much earnestness, though occasionally perhaps with some degree of hypercriticism, according to the disposition to refine, which characterizes all his writings, appears to me a matter of first importance to the true notion of practical christianity; and it is one cause of the lax notions and defective practice of some well-disposed christians, that they are led, not avowedly perhaps, but practically to believe all, that is necessary to their salvation, to have been already done for them, or, if any thing further is necessary to be wrought in them, that it will infallibly be wrought before the consummation of their destiny at the last day, and that they have only to wait for it with patience. Now it is clear, that saint Paul himself, though christian peace was possessed by him as eminently as by any other mortal, yet was never satisfied even with his own great attainments, but pressed eagerly forward, as if his actual salvation depended upon his making still greater progress in grace than he had hitherto reached, and as if a failure in that object of pursuit would even involve his becoming a castaway. The real work of faith is reliance not only on what Christ has already done for us all on the cross, but on his readiness also to do all the remainder, and to form in us, even while on Earth, that divine image and likeness, which sin has obliterated, progressively indeed, and therefore for a time imperfectly, if we will only come to him for it in the way of his appointment, and follow his promised guidance. It is hereunto, that saint Paul labored in behalf both of himself and others, striving according to his working, who wrought in him mightily. This was that, which required so much wisdom in him, to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, because Christ, formed in them, constituted their personal hope of glory: and thus it

becomes every christian, who would fulfil all the good pleasure of his lord's goodness, and the work of faith with power, 2 Thess. i. 11., to watch from day to day his remaining corruptions, not with faintheartedness, as if he doubted his lord's graciousness and power, but with firm confidence, that, while he yields to his direction, he, who has begun a good work in him, will perform it unto the end, that so, advancing from faith to faith, and from grace to grace, he may have the witness in himself, that he believeth in the son of God unto life everlasting. With these feelings he will be earnest in his christian course, desiring to add to his faith virtue, and every other quality, which may adorn his calling, and assure his heart before God: and it is the want of this perception of what is necessary to be done on our part, after obtaining the light of salvation, that occasions the languor of christians, and the confidence, with which men rely on the blood of Christ, without laboring to bring forth fruit, and to ripen in christian grace. The attainment of imputed righteousness is the commencement of the christian course. The attainment of inherent righteousness should be the incessant object of our subsequent pursuit and hope. If christianity had its perfect work, the christian church would present a very different aspect from what it does, and would stand out in brighter colours and bolder relief from the world around. Its labour of love would be sustained by a principle of self-denial and self-government; and the description of the Thessalonian converts would be more generally applicable—'Your faith 'groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all 'toward each other aboundeth.' 2 Thess. i. 3.

P. 183. *How is it possible, that we should carry into effect*

this, or any other evangelical precept, while we remain in doubt, whether our sins are indeed blotted out?

Bellarmine denies the possibility, or at least the safety of such a conviction as this, because it implies a certainty of our own grace; and he contends, 'non expedire, ut homines habeant ' ordinarie certitudinem de propria gratia : ' for which position he produces the following authorities and reasons. ' S. Gre- ' gorius scribit, lib. 9. moralium, cap. 17.—" Si scimus, nos " gratiam habere, superbimus,"—, et ipse Dominus, Luc. 18. ' per parabolam pharisæi et publicani ostendit, eos, qui se ' justos esse confidunt, facile se cæteris anteponere, eosque ' despicere. " Non sum " (aiunt) " sicut cæteri hominum, " velut hic publicanus." Contra autem ignoratio hujus secreti ' humilitatem conservat, et auget.' Tertiæ Controversiæ Gen. ' Con. ii. prima, de justificatione impii. l. iii. c. 8.

But the conviction, here referred to, rests not on a persuasion of our own grace, but on a belief of the Lord's covenanted mercy. He has proclaimed an universal amnesty for human offences; and we come, to lay claim to it. This implies, not that we have any desert, by which we may lay claim to the amnesty. It implies on the contrary a sense of our guilt, because otherwise we should have no need to apply for it. Neither can it lead us to despise others, because the same mercy, which is offered to us, is offered to all. The only difference is, that we feel our need of it, which many do not; and therefore surely our conviction is more favorable to humility than theirs. The very point, the distinctive and characteristic feature in our lord's description of the pharisee, is, that he despises others; which it is impossible, that we should do, while we only believe in our lord's mercy, but not in our own fitness for it. Our conviction is, not that he re-

ceives us in particular, but that he receives every one, who comes to him; and this persuasion is essential to our coming to him with that thankful, humble, confiding spirit, which lays hold of his promises, and makes them the foundation of a renewed life and conversation.

P. 191. *We find the apostle, Paul, himself lamenting, that there was still sin in his members.*

In the passage, here referred to, from the seventh chapter to the Romans, saint Paul is by many understood to speak not in his own person, but in the assumed character of a carnal, or unconverted man. The apostle appears to me to have guarded his language against that construction by the introduction of the words, αὐτος ἐγω, in the last clause of it; in addition to which the following statements, which occur in the course of his argument, seem to be quite inconsistent with that hypothesis. 'To will that, which is good, is present with me. I 'would do good. I delight in the law of God in the inward 'man. With the mind I serve the law of God.' This is not the language of an unconverted man; and the profession throughout is of the same character, being that of a man, who knew what was right, and strove to follow it, but found a countervailing principle in that corrupt nature, which he in common with all of us inherited from Adam, and which continually thwarted those better inclinations, which were implanted in him by the grace of God. Hence he constantly speaks of himself, not only here, but in other epistles, as maintaining a warfare, following after what he had not yet attained, and attributing all his successes to Christ, dwelling in him, just as he here attributes his failure to sin, dwelling in him, till at last, when he could say—'I have finished my

'course,'—he was enabled to say also—'I have fought a good 'fight.' It may be objected to this exposition, that he himself says at the beginning of the passage—'I am carnal'—, an assertion, which may be thought as incompatible with a state of grace, as those, which I have before quoted, are with a state of unconverted nature. But the purest christian is still carnal in part; every human being is one, who has been sold, πεπραμένος, under sin; and the apostle limits his confession to the depraved appetites of his original nature, as contradistinguished from those, in which he served the law of God, by the parenthetical phrase—'In me (that is in my flesh) 'dwelleth no good thing.' In fact, though he felt the motions of the flesh, warring in his members against the law of his mind, yet this latter was the law, which he deliberately followed; and therefore, with whatever impediments from within, he still walked, he still determined his course, and made progress in it, not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

P. 199. *That process is indeed most justly called by Scougal the life of God in the soul of man, and by Horsley the mysterious commerce of the believer's soul with the divine spirit.*

The former phrase is the title of a valuable tract, published by the Society for promoting christian knowledge. The latter occurs amidst an enumeration of some of the peculiar doctrines of revelation, in a Charge, delivered to the clergy of the diocese of St. David's in 1790.

THE END.

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